

In Their Own Words: Women Defining Ministry
Toward a Feminist Theology of Pastoral Care

A Professional Project
Presented to the Faculty of
School of Theology of Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
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This professional project, completed by

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*has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty
of the School of Theology at Claremont in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of*

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ABSTRACT

The theologies which inform pastoral care have a patriarchal bias. They are culturally bound and dominated by the thought of Western, white, middle-class males. Feminist theologies are more inclusive than these dominant theologies and will, therefore, provide a more adequate method of empowering and liberating women and men than do the dominant theologies of pastoral care.

Seven women ministers were interviewed concerning the theologies which inform their work. A literature search of three pastoral care journals was completed. Implications for the ministry from both these sources were integrated with the theologies of Beverly Wildung Harrison and Carter Heyward.

Relationality was found to be central to these women's ministries. Each bore physical witness to the inclusivity of the ministry. Also important was the concept of praxis--acting in the world and then reflecting on that action. Because of this, a feminist theology of pastoral care is by definition dynamic.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

During the past fifteen years, the number of women entering the parish ministry has steadily increased. As more women entered the ministry there has been an expectation that pastoral care would change to reflect the experience of these women. However, because of the resistance to calling or assigning women to churches, the emphasis has had to be on getting these women ministers into placements in which they could make use of their gifts and abilities. This effort has taken much of the energy of religious feminists and for this reason, no systematic attempt has been made to outline a feminist theology of pastoral care. This project is a start in that direction.

During my basic quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education, I realized that feminist theology had a great deal to contribute to pastoral care. The contribution was not just in understanding the particular problems of women, but also that it might offer a new approach to pastoral care which would serve both women and men better.

The theologies which, to date, have informed pastoral care have a patriarchal bias. They came out of the experience of men. They are culturally bound, dominated by the thought of Western, white, middle-class males. As such, they have ignored the experience of over half the populace

who are female and the more than half who are of color and non-Western. This project is intended to address that part of the problem that relates to Anglo women in the Liberal Protestant Church in North America. Because this author is Anglo, middle-class, and North American, I do not pretend to speak for those who do not share these characteristics.

Instead, I take seriously the words of Carter Heyward "...that our theological creativity is enhanced, not diminished, by understanding the particularities, thus limits, of our own lives as lived in relation to -- not as identical with -- others."¹

This author is also a Unitarian Universalist. Some might question the inclusion of the Unitarian Universalists in the category of Protestants. However, I am doing so because our roots are certainly in the Reformation which gave birth to other Liberal Protestant denominations. In addition, our pastoral theology is with few exceptions the same as that which informs liberal Trinitarians.

Because feminist theologies have the potential for being more inclusive than patriarchal theologies, I believe the work in this project will apply to groups other than Anglo Liberal Protestant North American women. However, I will not attempt to speak for my sisters who are poor, of

¹Carter Heyward, "An Unfinished Symphony of Liberation: the Radicalization of Christian Feminism Among White U.S. Women," Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion 1:1 (Spring 1985) 100.

color, whose faith is not Liberal Protestant, and who do not live in North America.

As ministers we are often called upon to be with people in crisis. Many of the crises which women face are ones which lie outside the experience of those who wrote the dominant theologies. These include wife abuse, rape, childbirth, contraception, illnesses leading to mastectomy and hysterectomy, and the eating disorders: anorexia, bulimia, and compulsive over-eating. Because of the efforts of feminists in the area of women's health care, we have learned more about the impact of these crises in the lives of women and with this greater knowledge has come the recognition of the inadequacy of patriarchal theologies in addressing the lives of women. For example, can a woman who has been beaten and raped be comforted by the image of a father god even if that image is presented as a kindly father? And this father god is not always seen as kindly, but very often he is the stern issuer of the command. He is the one who has told her to hide her sexuality behind a veil so that she will not be a temptress luring men into immoral behaviors such as rape. In a similar vein, how can a woman who has had a hysterectomy find healing and wholeness in a theology that values a woman mainly because she can give birth?

These questions lead to a more basic issue: the role of patriarchal theology in our society. By patriarchal

theology I mean that which "celebrates a one-sided world."² This is not a world in which only men have power. Rather, it is a world where "a few men have power over other men, women, children, slaves, and colonized people."³ Those without the power are excluded from the decisions which affect their lives. This patriarchal theology has undergirded our sexist society and reinforced the existing sexism, racism, and classism.

The dominant values in our society see women as a means to men's ends. Women have been discouraged from discovering and acting on their own needs and instead encouraged to act to fulfill the needs of others--usually the men in their lives be they their fathers, husbands, bosses, or ministers. For the woman who is conscious of this dynamic, a minister, male or female, who is grounded in patriarchal theology is often seen as representative of the dominant values and is not trusted to understand a woman who is questioning those values. Many of these women have left organized religion because it is no longer relevant to their lives. While one may argue that this is a loss for them, the loss for the church is considerable. We no longer have

²Marie Augusta Neal, "Pathology of the Men's Church," in Virgil Elizondo and Norbert Greinacher (eds.) Women in a Men's Church (New York: Seabury Press) 53.

³Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her (New York: Crossroad, 1983) 29.

their energy and creativity, and we have fallen down on our goal of bringing justice to the world.

Just as important is the problem for the women who stay in the church and who, perhaps, do not even question the sexism in society, let alone in the church. A woman can be victimized by sexism whether she is aware of the dynamic or not. If we do not examine the theology that informs our pastoral care, we serve, perhaps unwittingly, as agents of that theology and serve to reinforce the injustice inherent in it. Because a sexist society is the sea in which we swim, it is as difficult for ministers as for lay people to break free of this kind of thinking. Patriarchal theologies share a characteristic of hierarchal ordering in relationships. We find ourselves "ministering to" and not "ministering with" members of our congregation. We interpret life's meaning for the laity or the meaning of a crisis for an individual or family instead of moving with them to their own interpretation. Because feminine experience is not incorporated in the dominant theologies, pastoral interpretation of events can be especially troublesome for women.

As was mentioned, above women are socialized to be alert to, and to fulfill, the needs of others and to ignore their own needs and agency. The pastor-congregant relationship often reinforces this traditional role of women. This is especially true if the minister has not examined the patriarchal bias of his/her theology. In this

situation it is difficult, if not impossible, for women to come to an understanding of themselves as agents because that possibility is not offered to them. In addition, they are too busy trying to meet the needs of others, including those of the pastor. The impact of this in a situation of wife abuse, for example, is that the woman sees herself as the one to blame because she did not meet her husbands needs which is her ordained role. A woman who has had a mastectomy may feel guilty because a part of her body had to be removed due to disease. Because of these feelings of guilt, she may not be able to express, or even to feel, anger at the removal of her breast which can be understood as a justifiable reaction.

One important way that people understand themselves and the world is through relationships. If the church is a place where people can reach the fullness of their potential, then relationships in the church should be enabling ones. The church should not be the reinforcer of societal norms because it is those norms which keep them from fulfilling their potential, and most especially keep women from doing so. If language is changed to be more inclusive, but relationships remain hierarchical and exclusive, little has been done to correct the injustice that finds women subordinated. This means that the church remains a place where people do not reach the fullness of their potential. It prevents the church from being a place for the revisioning of an unjust world with the revisioning

taking place in relationships as well as in social action and proclamation.

Language can be made inclusive and Mary and Martha and Ruth can be the subject of sermons, but if pastoral care remains bound by the unexamined patriarchal nature of theology, relationships will embody the very sexism we say we oppose. By the same token, the church will be denied the opportunity of living out a theology which holds

. . . there is no higher value--no greater good, no other God--than that which enables human beings to love all people as themselves, to do what is just, and to share the earth and its resources as a common home and heritage.⁴

One aspect of a theology like this would be that it take into consideration more than the socially-generated role of women. This would mean that women no longer be viewed as the recipients of superior male knowledge and judgment, but instead as people, as subjects not objects. This project attempts to develop such a theology from three sources: the ministries of women as described in interviews for this project, ministries of women as described in articles in pastoral care journals, and the theologies of Carter Heyward and Beverly Wildung Harrison. Feminist theologies hold in common a belief in the legitimacy of human experience and action in the world as the ground for their thinking about

⁴Carter Heyward, The Redemption of God (Lanham: University Press of America, 1982) 196.

God. In this respect, they are much more explicit, and one might even say more honest, as to their origins than those dominant patriarchal theologies which claim to be based on divine revelation unaffected by human experience and/or interpretation.

Peggy Ann Way, in a 1976 editorial titled, "Truth and Pastoral Theology," which appeared in the Summer issue of Pastoral Psychology⁵ argues that those who are ministers consider themselves "primary truth seekers" instead of looking to other disciplines such as theology and psychology to define the work of pastoral care. In this sense pastoral would cease to have a "derivative identity" in which "we let others tell us who we are" ⁶ and would begin to develop an "intrinsic identity" which, she says, "lies in our call to ministry as defined in the tradition of the church and as embodied in our pastoral practice"⁷

She contends that our best hope lies in taking seriously the practice of ministry as a discipline.

Indeed, our own (methods and processes of conceptualization) are as yet essentially untested, for, if we can break out of our white, middle-class, intellectual criteria for church and ministry and invite in all those colleagues who engage in ministry, our

⁵Peggy Ann Way, "Truth and Pastoral Theology," Pastoral Psychology 24:4 (Summer 1976).

⁶Peggy Ann Way, "Truth and Pastoral Theology," Pastoral Psychology 24:4 (Summer 1976) 265.

⁷Ibid., 265.

'researchers' penetrate the entire fabric of society. Our 'subjects' are lived with in longitudinal and dimensional ways that cannot be duplicated in any laboratory!

Our involvement is part of the data--no, it is not 'pure'--but whom did we allow to convince us that truth was? . . . For myself, I am beginning to claim the practice of ministry as one source of truth, with psychology as one cultural dimension among many to enhance my own experiences and with theology as a resource to help me interpret my data and place them within historical and philosophic perspective.⁸

Way's thinking offers a form for this project, one that I believe will not compromise the integrity of the interviews that were done with seven women parish ministers, but rather give them their proper due. The starting place will be with the interviews and what can be understood about women's ministry from journal articles by women in the ordained ministry. Heyward's and Harrison's theologies will be a "resource" and a way to place them in "perspective." I think that this approach is especially appropriate to a project on women's ministry for two reasons. The first is that Peggy Way believes that women coming into the ministry will "affect all ministers' sense of intrinsic identity" because it is something that all women seeking ordination have had to deal with. We could not enter seminary if we had accepted only our "derivative identities" and not gotten in touch with our "intrinsic identities."⁹ The other reason

⁸Ibid., 267.

⁹Ibid., 267.

I feel this approach to be especially appropriate is that Harrison herself "embraces a theological hermeneutic of liberation"¹⁰ in which our knowledge is grounded in our action.¹¹ This will be explained in more depth later.

I am a Unitarian Universalist and the question might be asked, "Why should I be so concerned with formulating a liberal theology of pastoral care albeit a feminist one?" But I am a Unitarian Universalist who does not share the viewpoint of many in our denomination who hold that theology is irrelevant in general and that the concerns raised by feminist theologians are unwarranted as they apply to Unitarian Universalism because we long ago freed ourselves from the Father God. In fact, many of us have freed ourselves from any god to believe in no-god. For this reason, Unitarian Universalist thinking has not done much to really confront patriarchal theology. We UUs believe that because we have left more orthodox religion behind that we have solved the problem and escaped the bonds of patriarchal religion. In fact, much of our theology functions as a reaction to that religion and for that reason are still bound by it. We hold to the flip-side of liberal trinitarian theology and because of that, we are still

¹⁰Beverly Harrison, "Human Sexuality and Mutuality: A Fresh Paradigm," Journal of Presbyterian History 61:1 (Spring 1983) 142.

¹¹Beverly Harrison, Our Right to Choose: Toward a New Ethic of Abortion (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983) 94-95.

defined by it and are still caught in its patriarchal bind. Like other mainline denominations we have not yet developed our own theology free of sexism.

In fact, in the area of pastoral care we have almost no theology and are dependent on liberal trinitarian writers because we have little UU work on same. If we even had a theology, we could extrapolate a pastoral care from that, but we do not and are therefore really out to sea without a boat. For this reason the problem I am addressing in this paper applies as much to us Unitarian Universalists as it does to those in Liberal Trinitarian Christian churches.

Thesis

The thesis of this project is that a feminist theology of pastoral care will provide a more adequate method of empowering and liberating women than do current theologies of pastoral care, and that this will also be true for men, but the primary concern here is with women.

Definition of Major Terms

Pastoral Care: This is the work of the ministry in all its aspects: preaching, counseling, teaching, working for justice in the world.

Feminist Theology. It is not adequate to talk about a feminist theolgy. Rather, one has to speak of feminist theologies--theologies done by feminists which share several characteristics. The work of Carter Heyward and Beverly Wildung Harrison highlight some of these characteristics. In feminist theologies God is not the One who stands apart from humanity, but is that which enables "deep relationality" between human beings and between humanity and the rest of creation. This relationality is grounded in bodily experience as well as emotion, and encompasses mutuality and interdependence in relation. Feminist theology is also critical: it works to understand the present and past through an examination of the social order and history. It is subversive and utopic. It has a vision for a world that can be.

Patriarchy/Patriarchal: Patriarchy is defined as "a form of community in which the father is the supreme authority in the family, clan, tribe, descent being reckoned in the male line."¹² Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza refines this even further in saying that "patriarchy represents a social-cultural system in which a few men have power over

¹²Laurence Urdang and Stuart Berg Flexner, The Random House Dictionary of the English Language (New York: Random House, 1968) 974.

other men, women, children, slaves, and colonized people."¹³ Schüssler-Fiorentza's definition is more adequate to describe Western social history and the current social context than is the dictionary definition. It is a few men, and not simply the father, who has control. Several assertions of patriarchy are put forth by Heyward: only a man and a woman can make a creative couple; the only truly creative act is procreative; and that "in order to have a social order someone must be on top and someone must be on the bottom: economically, religiously, sexually, and otherwise."¹⁴

Ministry To: "Ministry to" assumes that the minister holds preferential status in God's eyes and, therefore, in the eyes of the congregation. S/he is supposed to have greater insight. The movement in this is downward from the minister to laity. Brita Gill, in her article "A Ministry of Presence," talks about "being" a minister and "doing" ministry. She claims that because of women's experiences and the importance placed on relationality in their lives, that women are more likely to be ministers. That is, women are less likely to assume a role. Men, because of their socialization, are more likely to "do" their professional

¹³Fiorenza, 29.

¹⁴Heyward, 22.

work. The experience of women is human experience and therefore accessible. This breaks down barriers between minister and parishioners. Professional training is limited and exclusive and therefore inaccessible. The person possessing the professional education can choose to exercise control over what s/he lets others know. If the mystique is continued, then the parishioner believes that s/he does not have the proper education and therefore cannot participate in his/her own healing.¹⁵

Ministry With: This is ministry in which the pastor becomes the enabler for deep relationships between her/himself and others and between other members of the congregation. It is one in which the minister is a participant with others and in which her/his knowledge is not privileged, but is readily accessible to others.

Pastoral Theology: The theology which not only informs all areas of the parish ministry, but also arises out of that ministry by reflection on it.

¹⁵Brita Gill, "A Ministry of Presence," in Judith L. Weidman (ed.) Women Ministers (New York: Harper & Row, 1981) 104.

Work Previously Done in the Field

The work in this area is very limited. Prior to beginning this project, I had only been able to discover one article that offered a statement of the ministry of pastoral care by women. This is a 1981 article by Brita Gill titled, "A Ministry of Prescence," which appeared in Quarterly Review and in the book, Women Ministers. The article was written while Gill was an associate pastor in a San Francisco church and had primary responsibility in the area of counseling. Gill covered each area of her ministry including counseling and leadership and related her experience as a woman to her ministry. She also spent time examining her limits and the limits of women in general for the ministry. She made an important distinction between "being" a minister and "doing" a job.

Although Gill's work is fairly comprehensive, she had one significant omission: she did not draw on the work of any feminist theologians, but rather mentioned Buber and Tillich. In this area, I see my project extending beyond her work. Brita Gill's article was written from her experience about her experience. My project will supplement that part of her work in bringing together the experiences of several women ministers to draw some tentative conclusions.

I mentioned above that prior to beginning work on this project I was aware only of Gill's article as being the

only statement on women's ministry that came close to being comprehensive. Now after researching articles by women in pastoral care journals published since 1974, I do not have reason to modify my earlier statement. Insights about women's ministry may be gleaned from many of these articles, but there is still no comprehensive statement about the way women do ministry. It is beyond the scope of this project to provide that comprehensive statement because the interview sample is too small and because there are still too many unanswered questions. However, my work builds on what has been done and will itself provide a beginning for future work.

Scope and Limitations of the Project

The project looks at the possibilities offered for pastoral care in the local church by feminist theology and by the insights from the ministry of individual women in their churches. The project is not limited to the area of one-to-one counseling, but through research and interviews will look at the interactions at all levels: groups, boards, and committees. In this sense, I intend to focus on pastoral care to individuals and to groups.

The literary research draws on the works of Carter Heyward and Beverly Wildung Harrison because I believe that they both offer theologies that are whole in that they attempt to integrate the body and mind of the individual in

the context of social justice issues. In addition, their theologies seem to come very much out of their experience as women. The other area of literary research was a review of articles written by women in the parish ministry in three journals: Christian Ministry, Pastoral Psychology, and Journal of Pastoral Care. This search covered the years 1975-1984.

My field research is tentative in its conclusions because the group interviewed was small and because there was be no control group. The research is exploratory and will, hopefully, point to some areas in which more rigorous research might be fruitful.

Procedure for Integration

This project is a combination of both literary and field research. The former is a review materials in the field of feminist theology with the purpose of understanding the insights offered to pastoral care. The field research will attempt to answer the question, "What insights do the ministries of women offer to pastoral care?" Some literature available on this question in the journals and in books such as *Women Ministers* edited by Judith L. Weidman. I have tried to be complete in my inclusion of these. The bulk of the field research, however, is done through interviews. Details of the interviewing process will be found in Chapter Two. Because there is very little work in

this area, the project is of necessity an attempt to make explicit some connections between feminist theology, feminist counseling, and pastoral care that are not now explicit, but only implied.

Project Outline

This first chapter provides an introduction to the project. The second chapter will look on the practice of ministry by women as a source of insight for pastoral care and theology. The results of interviews with seven women in the ministry are given there. The third chapter approaches this same subject through the writings of women in ministry during the past ten years. The literature search covered the years since 1975 and was focused in three journals: Christian Ministry, Journal of Pastoral Care, and Pastoral Psychology. Some conclusions are drawn here from the interviews and the articles about a feminist theology of pastoral care.

The fourth chapter describes the theologies of Carter Heyward and Beverly Wildung Harrison and examines them for insights into a feminist theology of pastoral care. In the fifth and final chapter the materials from Chapters 2, 3, and 4 are integrated to discover what we can learn about ministry by women in particular and what insights their ministries offer pastoral care in general. Directions for future research are also addressed.

Chapter 2

THE INTERVIEWS

To begin to claim ministry as a source of truth as Peggy Ann Way urges¹ we have to understand what comprises ministry. We have to give content to the truth of ministry, and that can only be done by understanding how ministers minister. In the context of this paper it can only be done by understanding how women ministers minister.

This problem was approached in two ways. First, through interviews with women in the ministry. The results of these interviews are reported in this chapter. A second way of understanding how women ministers minister is through their written words. This will be covered in Chapter 3.

The interviews were conducted with seven women in their homes or offices. Each of the seven women has had a good deal of experience in the ministry and/or in church work prior to entering the ministry. Of the seven, the one newest to the ministry (she has had her own church for two-and-one-half years) was previously a choir director and volunteer leader at both the local church and conference level. The others had a minimum of seven years in the ordained ministry. As it turned out, five of the women

¹Peggy Ann Way, "Truth and Pastoral Theology," Pastoral Psychology 24:4 (Summer 1976) 266.

interviewed were the sole ministers in their churches. One of the others had had four years experience as the sole minister of a church, but was currently engaged in a co-ministry with her husband. The seventh woman was a regional minister in the Disciples of Christ and had had several years previous experience as a parish minister. All seven women were selected because of their present work or their work in the past which had acquainted them with the broad scope of responsibilities in parish ministry. The two women not presently serving as a sole pastor were able to offer additional helpful insights. One was able to offer experiences from a multi-church perspective gained through her regional position. The second, had had experience both as a sole minister and as a co-minister, and was able to provide insights from each perspective.

Questions

Questions asked in the interviews were designed to cover all areas of ministry. The foundational questions were:

1. Tell me about your background especially as it relates to work in the church and the ministry.
2. How do you draw on your experience as a women in your ministry?

3. How do you draw on your experience as a woman in the areas of:

- church administration and leadership?
- preaching and worship?
- counseling?
- religious education/Christian education?
- social justice?

4. What images of the divine, of God, and of Jesus do you bring to your ministry? How are these communicated? What difference do they make?

5. Do you perceive yourself offering a different ministry than the men you know?

6. What theologians have been important to you?

7. Do you feel you can express yourself fully as a woman in your ministry? What limits do you see for yourself?

In the discussion which follows these questions will serve as the organizing principle.

Sample

A broad cross-section of women in the ordained parish ministry was sought. The following describes major features of the sample. The names used here are fictitious.

Denominational Affiliation. Unitarian Universalist - 2 ; Disciples of Christ - 1; United Methodist - 2; United Church of Christ-Congregational - 1; Presbyterian - 1.

Marital Status and Family. Sybyl has been married and divorced twice and is the mother of two adult sons. Adele is married without children. Bess is in a second marriage and has three children who are adults and are living away from home. Katherine and Minna are in marriages of over twenty years and both have grown children; Katherine has four and Minna has three. Vivian is in a marriage of approximately ten years and has two small children. Clio was married to a minister, but has been divorced from him for over twenty years. Of the five who were married at the time of the interviews, three are married to ministers and two are not.

Pre-ordination Experience. Only Adele had gone straight from undergraduate school to seminary. Vivian had had some mission experience before entering seminary. In fact, it was that experience that convinced her to enter the

ministry. The other five women worked in paid or volunteer capacities for several years and entered the ministry as a second career. Four had served on church staffs. Minna, Clio, and Katherine had all served as Directors of Religious or Christian Education. Minna had been a DCE for sixteen years. Clio had served as a DRE for several years while she was married to her husband and for several years after her divorce before she entered seminary. Katherine had been active in her community and in her church, much of the time doing youth work. After she entered seminary she worked as a DCE. Bess had been a choir director as well as a very active lay leader in her church and conference. Sybyl had worked for a number of years as a fitter of contact lenses.

Post-ordination Experience: The youngest of these women, Adele and Vivian, were ordained in 1973. Adele was an associate for a year, a "co-minister with a senior pastor" for two years which was interrupted by one year as an interim senior in the same church. For seven years she has served as a regional minister doing crisis intervention, placement, and program planning for youth and adults. Vivian also served as an associate for one year and then sole minister to a church in a rural setting for four years. She and her husband then shared responsibility for three churches until after the birth of their first child three years ago. Since that time they have been co-ministers at one of the three churches for which they shared

responsibility. It is a church of approximately two hundred and fifty members and is the one for which she had primary responsibility during their shared ministry. The church is located approximately forty-miles from Los Angeles in a working-class area that has been hit by plant closures.

Katherine was forty years old when she was ordained as a deacon in 1975. She worked as a Director of Christian Education for several years and then changed denominations and was ordained. She served as an associate for three years and has been in her present position as sole pastor to a church of just over one hundred members for two years. It is located in a suburb of Los Angeles and has a diverse congregation in age and social class.

Minna was ordained in 1977, served as an assistant for three years, did some interim work, and has been in her present position for four years. It is a church with one hundred and ninety members. It is located in an upper-middle class section of a Los Angeles suburb.

Sybyl has had seven years in the ministry. Ordained in 1978, she served two years as a co-associate with her husband, took one year off, and was called to her present church over four years ago. Its congregation numbers about one hundred and fifty. Her church is outside of the Los Angeles area in a seaside community. The congregation is mainly white, middle-class.

After graduation from theological school, Clio was called as the Associate Minister of a three hundred member

church. She was forced to resign after two years, and at that time came to her present church. She has been sole minister of this seventy-five member church since 1969 and plans to retire in June 1985. Her church is in a rural, agricultural community some distance from Los Angeles. The congregation is Anglo with a few exceptions and is middle-class.

The last to be ordained of this sampling, Bess has had her own church for two and one half years. Prior to that she served as a part-time associate while attending seminary. Her church has over one hundred members, many of whom are elderly and female. It is located in the Los Angeles metropolitan area.

Interview Method. All the interviews were conducted in the daytime. Clio and Katherine were interviewed in their homes. Adele was interviewed in an eatery. The other four were interviewed in their church offices. The questions asked were those cited above. Follow-up questions were asked if the answers were unclear or if the responses raised other questions. In two instances with Minna and with Katherine, the question relating to how they perceived their ministry to be different from male ministers was not asked because they had addressed the issue in their other answers.

The interviewer recorded the answers with pen and paper. No tape recorder was used. Every attempt was made to record verbatim responses. The notes were reviewed later and organized according to major themes brought out in relation to the questions. If the record of the conversation was not clear at points, it was left as stated and no effort to "fill in" the blanks was made. The final step in the analysis came when the responses were grouped according to questions in this paper. The results of the interviews can be found in the appendix.

Results of the Interviews

How does your experience as a woman inform your ministry?

Two mentioned what I shall call "bodily witness." Sybil said, "Women are live visual aids" (to a different ministry). Adele commented, "Being with a congregation as a woman has enough power" in situations where she can't be outspoken in her challenge of patriarchal norms.

The women who are mothers mentioned skills or abilities that arise out of that context. Sybil said that in response to her children she had learned to focus intently, break for an interruption, and then go back to whatever she had been doing. Bess said that it was second nature for her to keep a continual balance of things and to plan things in her head. She also said that because the

mothering experience was twenty-four hours a day, she always has a sense, an intuitive one, of the congregation, and for example, will know when something is wrong. Katherine mentioned wanting to fix things and make things better as she had tried to do with her children. Katherine also said that as a mother she really learned to listen from her children and to "be really present." Vivian is a mother who has given birth during the time she served her congregation. Because of this, she believes that women, especially, feel more free to come to her around reproductive issues such as pregnancy and abortions. [The latter instance, may say more about the warmth and caring she projects than her role as a mother. Some women considering abortion would feel most uncomfortable going to their pregnant or recently-delivered minister.]

Adele said that she spends time "credentialling" herself. This was especially a problem when she was new to her present call because she had not yet established herself. It has become less of a problem as she has proved herself competent. She is aware that it may become a problem in the future when she accepts a new position. Her father has a high position in the denomination and is well known. This fact has created two additional problems for her. With the many people who know her father, she spends energy "not being a daughter" and "establishing herself as an individual," a problem exacerbated by her father's high

position in the denomination. In her mid-thirties, she is one of the two youngest women interviewed.

"Building up individual and collective self-esteem" was mentioned by Adele who also said that she gives people work to do and expects that they will do this "so they will get out of their feeling of helplessness." The regional minister, she uses this in crisis intervention and says that it is not an exclusively women's model, but does view her work as a "co-creative process" in which the "congregation is partner" with her. She says that she gives credit "sometimes more than is deserved" to help this process along. Minna, who had served as an interim to a congregation which was in difficulty, said that as a woman she "may see ways of bring new life" as she did in that situation. It was in there that she brought "new life" because she was willing to "put lots of time in."

Bess said that she thought that as a woman she was better at "drawing out gifts and skills than being an only authority." This, she continued, "inspires loyalty in the people who work with you." About her method of interaction she says that it is "relational" not a "machine" model. She believes that this is because she is like other women who are concerned about the way they "fit into families," and this interaction has to be "relational over hierarchichal" The issue of authority came up with Adele also who said that although she is directive that she does not need to be the "big cheese."

Several mentioned that they saw being a woman as an advantage for the ministry. Sybyl put it this way, "In ministry feminine activities are being manifested." She went on to say that both the masculine and the feminine need to be acted out and that the ideal ministry would be one of co-ministry between a man and a woman. Adele thought being a woman was an advantage because there are not many role expectations and so she can create her own. She continued that most people "don't really know what we're supposed to do." Because of this she felt that lifestyle issues and relations with parishioners were more open. Bess felt that as a woman she was a "resource person" possibly because she had been used to resourcing her family and assessing their needs. Minna believes that it is because of her fifty-eight years of life experience that she can see trends, and that she can integrate things and look at the whole. Sybyl made a similar comment when she described her feeling that she couldn't be a minister without her life experience and she came to the ministry late (age 41) precisely because she is a woman. Katherine said that she "baptizes a baby like nobody else can!" Minna Mentioned her ability to identify with people who feel trapped, overcome, or put-down as an advantage.

Some of the ministers expressed concern about traits that they considered feminine and sometimes problematical. Bess says that she takes everything personally including her husband's problems which has caused a good deal of stress.

She also says that she takes on the grief of others. Katherine has a hard time distancing herself from the church--something that she considered to be a "womanthing." For this reason she thought it good that she lives some distance from the church. Although she did not say that it was a problem another, Vivian pointed out that she is a perfectionist and a detail person partly because she is a woman.

In the context of this question several of the ministers brought up their feminism. Sybyl said because she was a minister to her whole congregation, male and female alike, she did not feel she could be an outspoken feminist as she had been in her co-ministry with her husband. In that situation she felt he gave balance. However, she went on to say that her activities and her whole being are feminist although she doesn't talk about her feminism. Adele approaches her interventions in congregations with male pastors cautiously. Because her interest is in helping the congregation be healthier, she operates where they are as far as language is concerned. Katherine leaves the "old (worship) stuff" alone and instead tries to use newer, inclusive materials. Her congregation kids her about her feminist language and although she knows that she is perceived differently than a male minister would be, she has never heard of anyone leaving the church because the minister is a woman. Vivian, who is in co-ministry with her husband, pointed to their non-traditional marriage in which

they share parenting, church, and home equally. This is the living out of a feminist commitment.

Clio said that she draws on her experience as a woman in "everything I do." She went on to describe herself as "woman-identified," and said that it has taken her a long time to find out that there is another way of being in the world--a male way--with which she cannot understand.

How do you draw on your experience as a woman in the area of church administration and leadership?

The ministers interviewed described a range of leadership styles as they talked about the way they lead in their ministries. Sybil says she uses "process authoritarian mode" and has been called the "steel butterfly." She tends to be authoritarian because as minister she has the total responsibility to make judgments, recommendations, and suggestions and has to live with the long term results of poorly-made decisions. She did not explain the "process" part of the term. About herself she says that she is a "good and firm administrator." At first she was concerned that she would fulfill the "negative expectation that a female minister would crumble," but she points out that now she can cry (and did so at a board meeting after the death of her father-in-law) because she has built up toughness in the eyes of the congregation. At

an early time in her ministry with this church, crying would have raised the question of stability.

Adele describes her style as "structured, not enabling" especially when she is working with youth. In general, she sees herself more directive than enabling and uses terms like "visionary" and "navigator" to describe herself. Her job, as she sees it, is to "think, plan, dream, strategize, and to take care of the congregation." She tries to ensure that "the rewards (for the congregation) are worth it(the work)." The feedback she gets from the congregations with whom she works is that she takes on mythic proportions for them. It should be mentioned that she is the regional minister and as such does not have a long-term, on-going relationship with a single congregation. She believes her leadership to be best with women because she understands their style and because she believes that women in religious life need models. She is conscious of hierarchy in religion in general, but is not conscious of her own status, in particular, except as people react to her because of her position. She did not take her position because of the status, but rather because she is "working in a particular place that works best."

Bess sees her leadership as reflecting the biblical model of Jesus: "relational, empowering, calling together." She believes this makes her no less an authority. However, she feels she is more vulnerable because she does not have secrets and has no mysterious power. What she has is a

"vulnerable kind of power." Her role in working with the laity is to "help them find that role which frees them to be leaven in the bread."

For Katherine whose family operates in a democratic way, an authoritarian ministry would not be her style. She will speak up, however, if she has strong feelings on an issue. While she is not confrontive, she has learned from her time on the school board that she needs to do what she believes is right. A good many of her ideas about leadership come from her years in youth work. She describes the style as giving them an idea which they think is "dumb," but later when it becomes their idea, they think that it's great. She says that in her church the polity is really congregational with plain, old individual styles of leadership. If something comes out of a committee it is out of a mutual decision about what needs to be done and what people can do. She is enthusiastic. Her congregation knows that she is with them. As a woman she says that she has a hard time distancing herself from some decisions in the church, but she does not have strong feelings about most things and is flexible.

Both Katherine and Minna were clear not to set their leadership styles over and against masculine styles. Minna does not believe in hierachichal arrangements and instead practices collegiality. As often as possible she shares the process of decision making and resists efforts by her congregation to push her into the position of being the

authority for them. There are exceptions to this mode of leadership, however. Once in a while she will use her authority as she did when the choir director wanted to sing three male-defined hymns in a Sunday service. She stopped him because she felt it would be too hard on the women in the church.

Vivian said that her leadership style was process-oriented, but believes that it has less to do with her sex than with her age (mid-30s). In her conference she observed that most men under forty tend to be collegial. She and her husband are. She believes that administration is probably the most difficult area in which to see a distinction between men and women.

Clio who was a DRE and who had run a nursery school said that her concept of enabling comes from her earlier experiences with children. In a sense she is "still trying to have a good nursery school and help people grow up." In her first years at her church, she had to "do everything" including straightening and housekeeping. She did it because she knew that in nursery school there were discipline problems if there was no order. Another influence on her leadership was her psychotherapy which helped her answer the question, "Who am I?" and gave her a sense of herself and of responsibility. She sees her style as encouraging people and helping them to see the possibilities all the while "letting them do it." Although she does not let everyone do everything.

How do you draw on your experience as a woman in the areas of preaching and worship?

During worship Sybyl makes certain that she comes out from behind the pulpit and is seen fully. In this way she believes that the Congregation's unconscious can be moved to consciousness (of the congregation) that she is a woman. On ceremonial occasions she feels the burden of representing all women. Being a woman has given her the "okayness of using 'I'." She is always prepared ahead. One of the difficulties in seminary was that there were no role models, no voice models, no dress models. In short, she had no women to look at. She had recently given her first sermon on language and says that it was the first time she talked about the feminism that she is living. Her language has always been inclusive with the congregation and she considers herself an authoritarian on the issue of the congregation's language.

Bess's approach is to affirm her congregation where they are. She believes that the beginnings of understanding the world's problems in understanding that we have the power and the commission to change things. In worship she will have people look around to reinforce that we are not alone but in relation. She is concerned with the inclusiveness of the liturgy except for the hymns. She expresses her concern with inclusiveness in making certain that some of the lay readers are men and that visiting preachers are men. This

is because it is an elderly congregation and women are in most positions of leadership. In this way, she points out, that she is more open than the man who served the congregation before. For her own sake she does not use masculine language to describe God, but she does not push the issue with the congregation.

For Katherine who did her Doctor of Ministry project in the area of preaching she works at "solid, tough scholarship." Her language is not flowery and is this way is not unlike that of men. She does have very strong feelings about language being inclusive "because it is very important to power-determination and self-fulfillment.

Minna says that she has preached on Luke 15 and the "lost parables" which describe God as a woman and has also done a dialogue sermon on Mary and Martha. She uses experiences from life when appropriate.

To Vivian a woman in the pulpit presents a different type of image, one that is more inclusive. "The Body of Christ is seen as inclusive." She pointed that in her experience there are usually more women in a church than there are men and yet there is usually a man up front "taking credit." She does not believe that her preaching style is different from that of a man, but her language is inclusive. She draws on a life experience that is different from a man's and uses images of children and sewing and needlework (which she does when she has time). She finds that she has to moderate her strong feelings about inclusive

language with the congregation. As she puts it, "If I didn't, I might as well not say anything" (because they would not listen.) She even uses "Lord" sometimes although it is not a word with which she feels comfortable. She removes the male image of God, but has not changed the hymns because that would be too "threatening." She has talked on the new Inclusive Lectionary.

Clio is "reticent" in preaching and says that she would not be comfortable being "flamboyant." Her interest is in content not delivery something that she does not attribute to her womanhood. She has doubts about herself as a preacher because "women are not encouraged to give speeches." She tries to avoid stereotypically female gestures. Her sermons are "circular" with no beginning, middle, or end. Her writing process is unconscious and she never knows where it will come out. To her it is another exercise in finding out who she is and what she thinks.

How do you draw on your experience as a woman in the area of counseling?

Two of the women saw other opportunities for counseling than in the situations labelled as counseling. Bess said that Bible study was part study and part counseling. Vivian said that she does as much pastoral care in a meeting as she does in a counseling setting. She says that she talks to people anywhere. There are some women in

her church who now and then will ask her to lunch and she knows that that is a signal that something is wrong. She calls her brand of counseling "kitchen table counseling," and in general, finds that it is easier to sit down with a woman, who will usually give instant acceptability, than it is to sit down with a man.

Sybyl keeps tabs on the number of women and the number of men who seek her counsel. She feels that it is important to keep a balance. At present she has as many men who come to see her as she does women. Her experience has given her a capacity for understanding because she has "worked hard on her own things in life." She feels that the difficulties in her own life help her to understand those of others.

In contrast, Katherine says that because her life has been easy she doesn't have problems on which to draw and therefore finds herself impatient with those women who are chronic complainers. She is trying to be more of a listener. She does not think of herself as an expert and has not honed her skills. However, she is good with people and when she does counseling, it is from a real "gut" level. She does not emphasize counseling, but when the feelings are genuine she will "cry with them."

Bess says that people appreciate her interest in all areas of their lives and come to her with all kinds of problems. This process is helped by her "relational" stance and their perception of her as nonjudgmental. She is

"committed to working through to the best solutions and giving people a place to make a stand." It is this, she says that "gives them the feeling that they are forgiven." Consistent with her concept of the pastor as relational and vulnerable, she shares her problems with her congregations and lets them know of her need for their ministry. In pastoral calling and in situations of the death of a relative she is supportive, but that support sometimes is given in the form of confrontation on how they are going to live their lives.

A theme that seems to run through several areas of women's ministry is that they perceive themselves to be accepted by women especially. Minna said, "Women have told me things that they would not tell a man." Minna, in particular, feels accepted by all her congregation. She thinks that because she is a wife and mother of grown children that people find it easy to relate to her. She gave the example of an elderly man who was so comfortable with her that he insisted on lifting up his hospital gown and showing her his operation.

Clio has engaged in a ministry of long-term counseling in her church and she says that she can't imagine it any other way. Her approach is intuitive and she does not try to control the outcome. She has found out that when she has a change in attitude toward someone that sometimes that person will change. She is more comfortable counseling women because she understands them better than she does men.

In addition, she believes that women can benefit more than men can because their problems are greater--they are more alienated.

How do you draw on your experience as a woman in the area of religious/Christian education?

To some degree all of the parish ministers have some direct involvement with the religious education program. Katherine and Bess work with the youth group in their churches. Minna includes the children every Sunday in the worship service. She "really talks with the kids," feels comfortable with them, and is more skilled because of her years as a DCE. She sits and talks with them, not to the adults through them.

Sybyl consults with the religious education committee and the DRE. She also makes it a high priority to visit with families who have children and youth in the program so that the children can get an experience of the ministry firsthand. Katherine has finally succeeded in getting the Sunday School to meet at the same time as the worship service. She had been told that the church would not grow until this happened.

Vivian is very excited that there are children growing up in her church who think in terms of male and female images of the ministry. Beyond that she is not certain what difference being a woman has made except that

she is there with the teachers and is supportive and interested. Because of a lack of leadership in her church she has had to spend a good deal of time with the religious education program. At first, she had problems because it is a typically feminine area, but found that she really enjoys it. Because of her teaching background, she does have more familiarity with child development and with curriculum than does her husband.

For Clio children are very important and she considers child-rearing the most important thing that anyone can do. That is why she is so concerned about women. Changing parenting practices is a most important part of the ministry for her. Children are included in the first part of the worship service every Sunday although she does not interact in a special way. There is always a story read by a lay member of the congregation.

How do you draw on your experience as a woman in the area of social justice?

Two of the ministers mentioned ways in which their being a woman affected their approach to social justice. Sybyl said that she has a "more diffuse awareness of peace." She has what she refers to as "a mother's experience of war" which she especially became aware of in the sense of relief that came from knowing that her sons were no longer subject to the draft. At the same time she points out that she has

been called to a church with "vast spectrum" of beliefs, and finds herself in conflict between her pastoral and prophetic roles. She is a "new being in the political arena."

Vivian raised the issue of homosexuality. She says that because of her experience of exclusion as a woman, she is more understanding of others who are excluded such as gays and lesbians who have been excluded from the ministry in her denomination. She is committed to taking a stand in any way she can. Another of the ministers said that she gives her parishioners courage. She told of an elderly woman who had the courage to affirm what she believed in a discussion and attributed her courage to what she had received from the minister.

Minna said that because she is a woman she raises issues cautiously "so that people can hear and not condemn." Both she and her church are active and have taken stands on the nuclear freeze. The women's group at her church "talks about everything." Katherine says that in her church "nothing is sacred; every issue is to be dealt with." Even so she describes herself as "not a prophet, but a clown."

Adele, who is the regional minister, points to a real lack of understanding of the world today by the local church. This is manifested by an attitude that views changes as "something to be cured" instead of a natural process. She is troubled by this yearning for things to be as they were. (If things hadn't changed, then congregations would

know how to minister.) She sees this attitude reflected in the reluctance of long-time members of women's groups in churches to meet at time convenient for younger working women.

As a radical feminist, Clio, is out to change the system. She believes that men are more likely to think about applying "bandaids" to social injustices. She is concerned about child-rearing, but is less inclined to think of specific issues and is more interested in a "philosophic thing about patriarchy." Her guiding slogan for years has been "Feminism is not an issue—it's the whole thing."

What images of the divine, of God, and of Jesus do you bring to your ministry? How are these communicated? What difference do they make?

Sybyl describes herself as "a little to the left of Mary Daly" and, also, as a "happy existentialist." For her God/Divine is not anthropomorphic and her prayers are not conventional in the sense of petitioning. As a Unitarian Universalist she subscribes to process philosophy without being Christian. She does use the word "God," but does so "carefully." She likes to use theological words and to redefine and explain them. She communicates her imagery during worship, in her priestly role, when she comes out

from behind the pulpit and "her image makes it impossible for God's image to be totally male."

For Adele, God is overwhelmingly creator, nurturer, and parent; less often God is healer and/or empowerer. The images of God that she holds are mothering images. Jesus is the visionary revolutionary who turns everything inside out (parabolic). Her image of Jesus is not one who is inaccessible, but rather brother or partner.

To Bess, God is open to where we are, is responsive and caring and loving. God is not manipulative, but responding; not punishing, but weeping with us and over us. All of us carry God and all of us can make a difference. God works in partnership with us. She sees Jesus as having been a servant, but not one who was meek and mild. He lived as a human a life as possible. We can use his life as model in personal work and in pulling us together. She communicates her belief about Jesus in her style of leadership.

In worship Katherine uses the image of God as the tender mother with children at her breast. God is in the world and God is calling us. She never uses the father image because it is overused. However, she does not correct those who do use it in her congregation. She prefers process imagery to that of omnipotent or almighty. While their worship ends with the Lord's prayer, the pastoral prayer is always inclusive and if specific, is feminine. This gives her congregation both male and female images in

worship. She tends to shy away from images of Jesus, but she does talk about the "spirit of the Cosmic Christ" and "Christ being Creative Transformation." She sees Jesus in the neighbor and in the world.

Although she thinks of God in feminine images, Minna does use masculine language. However, she says she is careful of the "overly-masculine." She does not address God as mother in public, but instead uses "Gracious God" or "Loving God." She is very much aware of the feminine imagery for God in the Bible. She does not eliminate "father" to describe God because she is aware of Jesus' calling God, "Abba," and because she had a very good relationship with her own father. She does believe that God is beyond gender, however. Jesus is a liberator especially for women. He brings something radically new: supportive, encouraging and breaking out. Jesus and all of us have feminine aspects: gentle, but not mild.

Vivian who is in co-ministry with her husband says that often what she speaks about to her congregation contrasts sharply with what she believes personally. She has to do this because the congregation is not ready to hear her personal beliefs. She has a mother-father image of God. She removes the masculine imagery without adding the feminine because "there are only so many issues you can deal with." It is in small groups that she has the opportunity to raise new images and does so whenever the occasion

arises. The creative thinking that is going on in committees is making a difference she feels.

God is process for Clio and Jesus was a feminist. Her image is wholistic: she is a part of God. She has a responsibility to talk about the process that is God--to explain and understand it and to get plugged in.

Do you perceive yourself as offering a different type of ministry than the male ministers you know?

Sybyl says that when she took her present church, she had to decide to balance her ministry and to minister to both women and men. In her previous assignment she was freed to focus on the feminist part of her ministry because she knew her husband would provide the masculine balance. She sees ministry as have masculine and feminine components and women are bringing balance to the ministry. She is presently serving on the executive board of a denominational ministers organization and finds that she is held responsible by women not on the board for actions of the board. To her great frustration she is perceived as mother by these same women. She does believe that her presence on the board has made a difference in drawing attention to the way language is used in "ways other than genderizing--in images, unconscious, and in implications of statements made."

Adele does not see a male or female issue in her work. When she is working with a congregation in crisis she does see a fear of diversity and of change, which could be sexist. Some congregations are functioning as "single cells"--a family instead of a church, and this could probably be pushed to a feminist issue.

Bess, who happens to be serving on a denominational board, says that she "likes men and has learned to play their games, but always tries to ask the question that will call them into account." In contrast to some men pastors she knows, she does not believe that sitting at her desk or attending meetings is enough. She prefers a different type of accountability than that which she perceives male ministers to favor. She holds herself accountable for reading, calling, and relating to people, in addition to sitting at her desk and attending meetings. She puts priority on those in need and working with people on relationships including those in committees and boards. She believes that she helps humanize situations to make them more loving and caring. In contrast to her husband who is also a minister, she sees herself as relational to the whole group while he is relational on a one-to-one basis. She thinks most women in the ministry are extroverts, as she is, and most men in the ministry are introverts.

Katherine and Vivian saw differences in ministry based on things other than sex. Katherine saw them as individual differences and Vivian saw them as based more on

age. Minna thought that she and other women were more concerned with aesthetics and in creating a whole room environment.

What theologians have been important to you?

To better understand the thinking of each of the interviewees, their responses to this question have been kept intact rather than comparing each with the others.

Sybil: Penelope Washbourn, Rosemary Radford Reuther, Mary Daly, process theology papers, and women's poetry.

Adele: Elisabeth Schüssler-Fiorenza, Jean Baker Miller, Lyle Schaller "for church stuff," Sally McFague, and Dominic Crossan. Schüssler-Fiorenza is important because she helps us "write ourselves back into history." Miller is important for "the whole pleasing issue--that women's morality is based on pleasing and maintaining affectional ties."

Bess: John Cobb. Marjorie Suchocki and her book, God, Christ, and Church for putting process into place in the local church. Tillich was the one she like until she found process. The book Feminism and Process Thought has also been important for her.

Katherine: John Cobb, Reinhold Niebuhr, Sue Dunfee's work on the sin of hiding has been important to her, Virginia Mollenkott. Katherine says that her choices are "eclectic and cover a range." Mary Daly has blazed the trail although Katherine is "not where she is."

Minna: John Cobb, Beuchner, Hans Dieter Betz, Robert McAfee Brown, Bonhoeffer, and two biblical scholars: Wangerin, and Schweizer.

Vivian: Of the traditional ones, Tillich, who was the one with whom she most resonated in seminary. When she started seminary in 1972, the faculties had not grasped women's issues. She went to the first seminary quarter held for women at Grailville, Ohio. It gave participants a chance not to be a minority as they were in seminary. They did work in theology re-creating images and myths. The six week program was designed by the participants. They did "neat worship things" and also did work there with writings by Letty Russell, Rosemary Reuther, Nelle Morton, and Ann Wilson Schaef. Most important for her have been Russell, Schaef, and Reuther. In liberation theology, Gutierrez and Friere have been important. This year she has been reading Sexism and God-Talk and In Memory of Her by Reuther and Schüssler-Fiorenza respectively.

Clio: Heidegger was central to Clio's theological development; Being and Time shaped her thoughts. James

Luther Adams, a Unitarian Universalist theologian, was also important. David Roberts and Henry Nelson Wieman helped get things in order. She was "too far along" in her thinking to be influenced by feminist theologians. However, she does agree with Daly and Reuther.

Do you feel you can express yourself fully as a woman in you ministry? What limits do you see for yourself?

Sybil said that she expressed herself "well, but not fully." She points out that there are no models for expressing ourselves with the exception of Geraldine Ferraro who allowed us to hear a woman as a public speaker. On the subject of limits she says that as a woman she has a problem with how she sees her time and how her congregation sees her time. They see her time as interruptible. Her private time is not valued even by her, although she is learning to make her own space. She is still struggling with the issue of being consumed by a profession and what that means for a relationship. When she was still married and looking for her church (her husband had decided not to stay in the ministry) she was the one who had to decide where they were going to live and it was something she found she was not programmed for.

Adele saw limits as her own not so much being imposed on her. Because she serves a region, stamina is an issue for her, but she does not see it as a male or female

issue. Career-wise she and her husband, who is also a minister, have had to ask for the positions they wanted and have had to wait for these openings. (Recently, she had been offered a denominational position and had refused to take it until they guaranteed her husband a position at a nearby church.) She and her husband have adopted this stance to avoid being at the mercy of the institution. As a woman she sees that she would not be called to a large church. Katherine and Bess also mentioned this as a problem.

Bess gets very discouraged because the system is still very male. From her point of view it is easier to serve on the district or conference level than it is to get a "high-steeple church." Within her own congregation, she feels that she can really be herself although she tempers herself. She has an open ministry in that she shares with people what she is doing and participates in denominational activities outside her congregation.

Minna, who is fifty-eight years old, believes that she is more attractive to a congregation because of her experience and because the congregation knows that she is not using them as a stepping stone. She says that she will not raise women's issues because she is conscious of the fact that there are both men and women in a church.

Vivian feels that on the whole she has been well received and accepted by the congregations she has served. She has broken stereotypes and generally feels fulfilled.

Some sexism still exists although it is not blatant. She acknowledges some compromising on her part, which has been necessary in order to stay in the institutional church. She cannot be fully open about her faith and her God with the congregation. What she believes has to be tempered and interpreted. She has seen changes in the ten years since her ordination. There are now more women in all areas in the church, but she is concerned that the conservative backlash may have an effect. As she puts it, "She likes her work most days, but gets tired of the administrative and petty personal stuff." However, it is all worthwhile because of the profound experience she has in working with people in celebration and in crisis. She is there as the "vehicle of God's grace" for those difficult times in peoples' lives. Limits have been imposed by the choices she and her husband have made. She used to think that it was important to be best wife, mother and minister because she was one of the first, but she has had to accept the fact that she is human. She has had to make choices and set priorities and not be a superwoman. She "has found that it is okay not to do everything at once." For now she is glad that she has chosen to be with her children.

Clio believes that her only limit is time. She says that she could not ask for a better opportunity for fulfillment than in the ministry.

Implications for the Ministry

Even with the compromises and limits each felt, every one of the seven women who were interviewed seemed very glad to be in the ministry. Not one expressed reservations about her calling. Each one seemed enthusiastic and competent. This latter judgment being based on comprehension of and concern for the complex dynamics of their congregations and the workings of their churches. Several expressed this as an ability to keep several things going at once. Others expressed this in their attention to detail.

In the discussion of their leadership styles, each projected a deep sense of responsibility. Four of the women mentioned their ultimate responsibility for any decisions which affect the life of their congregations. All these women shared a willingness to make the hard decisions. This was expressed in just about these words by Clio and Minna. Sybyl and Adele both talked about being "authoritarian" and "directive." These words should be understood in the context of countering a societal perception of women as passive and probably do not mean the same thing as they would if applied to men. Bess expressed a willingness to confront even those who are grieving with tough, but necessary questions.

All of the women were aware of the difference that it made that they are women in the ministry. Their physical

presence attests to an inclusiveness which had, until recently been absent in the experience of most people. As Vivian mentioned, a woman in ministry leading a congregation affirms the contributions of the many women who bear much of the responsibility for keeping churches going.

The images of God and Jesus these women hold are not typical patriarchal images. Even Minna who does think of God as father also thinks of God as feminine. Their language like their images is inclusive. In fact, their approach to ministry is inclusive: involving people in decisions, using language in worship that speaks to all, and making certain that there is a balance of men and women laypeople helping to lead worship. Even in what could be viewed as compromising, there is an inclusiveness because the compromise or tempering is born out of a desire to reach as many in their congregations as possible.

Chapter 3

THE LITERATURE

The second source of discovering how women ministers minister was a literature search which included three periodicals: Pastoral Psychology, Journal of Pastoral Care, and Christian Ministry. Articles which were written by women, which addressed pastoral care issues, and which were published in the ten years between 1975 and 1984 were researched. A chronological bibliography of these articles can be found in Appendix B. Because the biographical information offered about the authors is brief, it was not always possible to determine if the writer was in the ordained parish ministry. To provide a basis for comparison with the interviews, only those articles that were written by women whose title was "reverend," or who had either of two degrees necessary for the ordained ministry--Doctor of Ministry or Master of Divinity, or who were serving in what was clearly a pastoral capacity were included in the sample. Relatively few of the articles met this criteria. In Pastoral Psychology out of twenty-one articles authored by women, only four were included in the sample. The other authors were listed as holding Ph.D.s or various masters degrees. The Journal of Pastoral Care had twenty-one articles written by women in the ministry. Five of these were included in this project. The Christian Ministry, in

the years since 1975, has published twenty-seven articles either authored or co-authored by women. Of these eleven were included in the sample. Articles co-authored by a woman and a man were excluded from the sample because it could not be determined which were the woman's ideas.

To provide a basis for comparison with the interviews, the interview questions have been used as an organizing principle for this chapter. This is an artificial construct, but does provide continuity with the information in the preceding chapter. The subject matter in the articles is disparate, but certain similarities appeared in some of the areas covered by the interview questions. Using the questions as the starting point made it possible to correlate the written materials with the interviews.

How does your experience as a woman inform your ministry?

Most often the articles seemed to answer this question. Gail G. Buchwalter is a minister in the United Presbyterian Church. At the time she wrote her article, "Woman in Ministry," she was co-pastor of the Community of Reconciliation in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Much of her article deals with the particularities of her then current situation which was in an inner-city church. She points out that as a woman she brings a different perspective to many of the identity questions that her parishioners are raising. Most of her pastoral care hours are spent with women and

some men who are "searching for new and meaningful ways to live and relate to other persons."¹

Sara Payne says that she does not spend much time preaching feminist theology in her church in Crozet, Virginia. This is because the people while thinking of themselves as against women's liberation have put in practice many of its tenets and have welcomed her and other professional women in non-traditional roles to their community. Because of this, she does not feel it necessary to preach a theology she and they are living out.²

In 1975 Carole Crumley wrote an article called "Managing in the Midst of Chaos" about her experiences in a Washington, D.C. church. Because it is a high pressure situation with many people needing and demanding many different things, she has learned how to keep her acts together under pressure.³ She says that she has learned how to juggle a multitude of things at any one time.⁴

Bobbie McKay, minister of a church in Illinois, believes that women bring iconoclasm to their ministries. In this they bring the possibility of change for the church.

¹Gail G. Buchwalter, "Woman in Ministry," Christian Ministry 6:3 (May 1975) 19.

²Sara A. Payne, "Welcome Sisters," Christian Ministry 6:3 (May 1975) 14.

³Carole Crumley, "Managing in the Midst of Chaos," Christian Ministry 6:4 (July 1975).

⁴Ibid., 11.

Appropriately, the name of her church is The New Church: a Caring Community. The primary focus of her ministry is in pastoral care and counseling.⁵

At the time she wrote her article for the Christian Ministry, Faith Conklin was the pastor of a church in Woodland Hills, California. She is now a District Superintendent for the United Methodist Church. She writes that her experiences as a wife and mother particularly affected her ministry. She found that she was trying to be good in all three roles and felt a great deal of guilt because she had chosen to work outside the home with the result that she was not always available to her family. In addition, she had not given herself permission to fail, because, as a symbol of all women, she felt she could not fail without bringing repercussions on many other women.⁶ She finally found that when she accepted that she couldn't be all things, her burden of guilt was greatly relieved.⁷

Denise Haines, an Episcopal priest, says that she "only knows that being a woman is not the same as being a man."⁸ She has decided that the best way to understand her

⁵Bobbie McKay, "Pastoral Care from a Woman's Perspective," Christian Ministry 11:4 (July 1980) 11-12.

⁶Faith Conklin, "Daddy Works and Mommy Is a Minister," Christian Ministry 12:2 (March 1981) 10.

⁷Ibid., 11.

⁸Denise G. Haines, "Paths and Companions," Journal of Pastoral Care 22:1 (March 1978) 3.

ministry is to collect stories of all the times "when it mattered as much that she was a woman as that she was a priest."⁹ Her article describes an event in which it mattered very much that she was a woman.

Ann Lammers, who spent a summer on the New York City docks as a chaplain at The Seamans Institute, said that her presence in that very male atmosphere said "something new has been born in the church."¹⁰ On the waterfront, Lammers says that the split between "the corrupt and the superhuman" is everpresent. She believes that her experience as a woman helped her see the split more clearly. This was because "the feminine is the most deeply split of psychic values."¹¹ She speculates that it is her femaleness that continually drew her into one of two experiences: she would find herself alone with one man as if "on a date" or she would be treated as "the Master's daughter."¹²

⁹Ibid., 5.

¹⁰Ann Conrad Lammers, "A Woman on the Docks," Journal of Pastoral Care 36:4 (December 1982) 219.

¹¹Ibid., 12.

¹²Ibid., 223-225.

How do you draw on your experience as a woman in the area of church administration and leadership?

Women in the articles mentioned several different leadership styles that can be seen as arising out of their experience as women. Carole Crumley, who pastors in Washington, D. C., says that one of her survival maxims is to "do what you can, with what you have, where you are." This and laughing a lot has helped in her maintaining in a difficult situation.¹³

Gail Buchwalter says that women do not demand the authority that men do and because of this she has been able to be more in mutual relation with her church community.¹⁴ She sees herself in dialogue with her congregation rather than being the authoritarian.¹⁵

Margaret Monroe-Cassel is a Baptist pastor. She says that she was always looking for a model outside herself until she realized that role models come from within. Forming our own roles from within gives us our real authority.¹⁶

¹³Crumley, 12.

¹⁴Buchwalter, 9.

¹⁵Ibid., 10.

¹⁶Margaret Monroe-Cassel, "It Would Have Been a Put-on," Christian Ministry 15:4 (July 1984) 22.

How do you draw on your experience as a woman in the areas of preaching and worship?

Gail Buchwalter, mentioned above, says that she is not radical enough for some of the women in her congregation. They have objected to her approach which is only to alter some of the sexist readings in worship materials and in hymns. She sees the issue as one of balancing "legitimate concerns" and "trying to be responsible to some of our religious history."¹⁷ She points out that she came to the Community of Reconciliation six years after it was founded. Before she came, the pulpit which projected above the congregation had been done away with and the ministers no longer wore clerical garb. She says that this was more consistent with her style as a woman because women ministers do not expect, or are they given, the same vestiture of authority that men are given and expect. She invites people to dialogue to reach an understanding of the Word which, she says, is the real authority for Christians. Her style is a threat to those who want answers in a "neatly packaged" religion.¹⁸

In administering the sacrament of baptism she offers participation to the parents who have the opportunity to

¹⁷Buchwalter, 8.

¹⁸Ibid., 10.

write the liturgy. Also when brothers and sisters are involved, she will do a baptism on her knees so that the siblings can see what is going on.¹⁹

In an article on the meaning of baptism for women Elsie Gibson tells of the power that she believes comes from baptism to women especially women who are called to the ministry. It is in baptism that sex distinctions are not recognized. Women are empowered to "acquiesce in suffering but not with resignation."²⁰

Donna Schaper, in an article on preaching, relates how it is that she cannot write a sermon until she has baked a batch of chocolate chip cookies and cleaned the house. Hers is an experience that many a woman who has trouble turning away from housework when she is required to do substantial writing will identify with. She adds that good writing "requires a large trash can."²¹

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Elsie Gibson, "What Baptism Means to Women," Christian Ministry 6:3 (May 1975) 5.

²¹Donna Schaper, "Relying on Grace," Christian Ministry 11:2 (March 1980) 11.

How do you draw on your experience as a woman in the areas of counseling?

Buchwalter says that in her experience counseling and pastoral care has been one of the most difficult areas in which to gain trust and acceptance from her parishioners. This is true for her also in when doing weddings and funerals. She says that the initial response is often one of scepticism which usually turns to support and thanks after the service, and at times gratitude for the tenderness she has shown.²²

The range of articles by women addressing counseling was wide and quite varied. The disproportionate attention to counseling in this sample may have resulted from the inclusion in the sample of two pastoral care journals. Two women mentioned the special ministry women might have to other ministers. Bobbie McKay said that because of their experience women are in a "unique position to recognize our need for care from others."²³ She believes that it is very important to communicate this to other ministers who will then be better able to communicate their need for care.²⁴ Margaret Monroe-Cassell believes it important that ministers

²²Buchwalter, 9.

²³McKay, 15.

²⁴Ibid., 14-15.

be "real and supportive" to each other so that we can strip off the phony manifestations of the ministry.²⁵

A number of the articles addressed very specific concerns. Ronna Case, a hospital chaplain, wrote an in-depth article on pastoral care to mothers of stillborn babies.²⁶ Laurel Arthur Burton proposed that bioethics be introduced into the cpe curriculum.²⁷ Jane Ranney Rzepka outlined the specifics of abortion counseling.²⁸ In this article she urges that ministers and pastoral counselors recognize that all persons have authority over their own sexuality. Even though this is difficult she believes that we should accept it and encourage responsibility in those we counsel.²⁹ Gayle L. Sandholm wrote "A Systems Perspective to Marriage Counseling."³⁰ Although she does not mention it, the systems approach could have great appeal for women because of its focus on interdependence of people. In her

²⁵Monroe-Cassell, 23.

²⁶Ronna Case, "When Birth Is Also a Funeral," Journal of Pastoral Care 32:1 (March 1978) 6-21.

²⁷Laurel Arthur Burton, "A Proposal for the Introduction of Bioethics into a Quarter of CPE," Journal of Pastoral Care 33:2 (June 1979) 110-119.

²⁸Jane Ranney Rzepka, "Counseling the Abortion Patient: A Pastoral Perspective," Pastoral Psychology 28:3 (Spring 1980) 168-180.

²⁹Ibid., 117.

³⁰Gayle L. Sandholm, "A Systems Perspective to Marriage Counseling," Pastoral Psychology 31:2 (Winter 1982) 118-128.

approach to people manifesting a histrionic personality, Gloria Armstrong recommends a multidimensional approach.³¹ Kathleen Rusnak describes a relationship with a friend who was denying a chronic disease. Rusnak came to accept a goal of enabling a person the freedom to make a choice.³² She said that this was a very difficult thing to do especially when the person did not want to follow the course that Rusnak thought best.³³

How do you draw on your experience as a woman in the area of religious/Christian education?

None of the authors in the sample addressed this.

How do you draw on your experience as a woman in the area of social justice?

Concerns about social justice came up in several different articles. Carole Crumley says that although it is difficult she sometimes has to "make a big noise" to

³¹Gloria F. Armstrong, "A Psychological and Theological Understanding of the Histrionic Personality," Pastoral Psychology 31:3 (Spring 1983) 199.

³²Kathleen Rusnak, "The Pastor as Enabler," Pastoral Psychology 28:1 (Fall 1979) 54.

³³*Ibid.*, 61.

expresse her outrage at the injustice that she sees daily.³⁴ Elsie Gibson, in her article about baptism, expresses concern that many denominations refuse to recognize the Holy Spirit working in a woman when it is leading her to the ministry.³⁵ Sara Payne, although she says that she doesn't preach feminist theology, believes that women have a responsibility to open up the church and to fight politically.³⁶ Bobbie McKay whose focus is pastoral care and counseling says that the survival of the world depends on "caring as a theological imperative."³⁷

Faith Conklin approaches social justice issues, in part, from the way she and her husband make decisions. Their way is relationality which she says is important in what it says to the congregation about family life. For her, "conflict is a given."³⁸ The chaplain on the docks, Ann Lammers, said that someday she will write of the battle for social justice there. She characterized this as her "fighting chaplaincy" and separated it from her woman chaplaincy.³⁹

³⁴Crumley, 12.

³⁵Gibson, 5-6.

³⁶Payne, 14.

³⁷McKay, 12.

³⁸Conklin, 12.

³⁹Lammers, 225.

What images of the divine, of God, and of Jesus do you bring to your ministry? How are these communicated? What difference do they make?

Elsie Gibson's image for the Trinity are all masculine. God, "the Father," gives equally to all.⁴⁰ Jesus offers a liberation that comes from within, and the Holy Spirit empowers women in our suffering especially that which leads to the ministry.⁴¹ Helen Terkelsen offered the image of God as mother-father. This image, she believes, affirms the wholeness of God.⁴²

Do you perceive yourself offering a different type of ministry than the male ministers you know?

This question was not addressed in the articles.

⁴⁰Gibson, 4.

⁴¹Ibid., 5.

⁴²Helen Terkelsen, "The Androgynous God: An Answer to the Freudian Father," Journal of Pastoral Care 22:1 (march 1978) 64.

Do you feel you can express yourself fully as a woman in your ministry? What limits do you see for yourself?

Several of the writers mentioned limits form women in the ministry. Because of the denial by some denominations of ordination to women, she is afraid that women will not be able to use their gifts to the fullest. Ruth Brandon Minton likewise mentions stagnation in roles that underemploy a woman minister's skills. Minton also mentions the stress that women are under because they are constantly being observed and because of a conflict that arises at times because of an expectation that women ministers will do the female things of sewing and cooking.⁴³

Buchwalter says that the sexuality issue is avoided by her parishioners. She continued her ministry through a pregnancy. It was at this time that she found the response of marginal members to her condition to be amusing. As a limit, Buchwalter cites the strain of needing to prove competence before she is accepted in any area of the ministry. She implies that it is easier for male clergy to fail because of their support network. In contrast, the ministry is a lonely profession for women.⁴⁴

⁴³Ruth Brandon Minter, "Women in Ministry: Beyond the Obstacles," Christian Ministry 16:2 (March 1985) 20-21.

⁴⁴Buchwalter, 10.

Sara Payne also raises the competency issue. The way she puts it is that you have to be "twice as effective to get half the credit" and thinks that it will be literally centuries before women are allowed to be mediocre.⁴⁵

Implications for the Ministry

An issue that comes up in both the interviews and the literature is that of bodily witness. Several of the authors mentioned the difference having a woman in the pulpit made. Likewise the ministers who were interviewed were aware of the visual impact they had. This impact is increased when the minister is pregnant. Two ministers mentioned this. Wearing a robe has a different connotation for women and men. A dress is normal attire for women, but not for men. When a man puts on a robe, it may be seen as a denial or hiding of his sexuality or wanting to be something he is not. However, when a woman puts on a robe, it can be seen as an affirmation of her sexuality--a connection to her bodyself. In this context, the femaleness of the minister says that there is a connection of body and mind and that the split is unnatural. Overcoming this split is important and may go a long way toward helping establish a fruitful approach to solving many of the world's problems.

⁴⁵Payne, 15.

Another area addressed was that of relationships. This seemed to come out in two ways. Women talked or wrote about their ability to maintain contact with a number of people and/or projects at one time. Several women in the interviews attributed this ability to their years of mothering. Relationships were also mentioned in the context of how the ministers relate now in their congregations. Faith Conklin writes of her relational decision-making and Bess, for example, tries to structure her worship so that the congregation is aware of their interconnectedness.

Images of God and Jesus seem to be more inclusive than in the dominant theologies for the ministers who were interviewed and, where they were mentioned, in the literature. Even Elsie Gibson's male Trinity has some more enabling features than those usually attributed to the "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Some concern with social justice issues crept into almost every article. At the very least, ministers were concerned with the plight of other women in the ministry. Even a number of articles on pastoral counseling dealt with social issues like rape and abortion.

Questioning the male authority models seemed to come up in articles and in the interviews. Gail Buchwalter makes a special point of describing her lack of male-type authority when she preaches. The ministers who were interviewed also mentioned different models. For example, Sybil's process authoritarian and Adele's enabler.

Chapter 4

THE THEOLOGIES OF CARTER HEYWARD AND BEVERLY HARRISON

Little work has been done by feminists in the area of the theology of pastoral care. We can only speculate on the reasons for this. It may be those who have written feminist theologies have been busy enough just writing more general theologies and have not yet gotten around to writing a pastoral theology. They might not have seen the need for it. Because of its emphasis on nurturing and healing, pastoral care is often perceived as a more "feminine" area than some of the other disciplines such as theology, church history, or biblical studies. As a more "feminine" art of the ministry, it is probably less susceptible to challenge from feminists.

In general, the pastoral arts, with the exception of pastoral counseling, have received less attention from women authors than have the disciplines of theology, church history, and biblical studies. The latter subjects have each been the focus of several books written by women. In contrast, it is not possible to find a book authored by a woman that addresses the subject of pastoral care in a comprehensive manner. This may result from the fact that women are just too new to the ministry to have had time to reflect on what it is that they are doing. Whatever the reason, those ministers who are with congregations everyday

are denied the benefit of a practical theology done by women. This chapter will not attempt to be a feminist theology of pastoral care, but rather will focus on the work of two theologians who have been selected for their relevance to pastoral theology.

The work of Beverly Wildung Harrison and Carter Heyward moves readily between the practical and the theoretical. This progresses naturally from the belief held by each of them that our knowledge is grounded in our action and not the other way around. Harrison, especially, makes the point that there is a very direct connection between how we act in the world, which includes doing theology and the way we understand God. Both Harrison and Heyward talk of our bodies and minds as a whole and not separate entities. Harrison says we are "self-directed, sensuous bodyselves."¹ This is an important issue for women in general, but it takes on special significance for women in the ministry. Important for me, too, is that both these women write out of active involvement in the church and a commitment to making it more just. Heyward and Harrison are friends. Their work is complementary and each acknowledges and incorporates the work of the other. This latter fact models the mutuality that is so important to both their theologies.

¹Beverly Harrison, "Human Sexuality and Mutuality: A Fresh Paradigm," Journal of Presbyterian History 61:1 (Spring 1983) 151.

The Importance of Praxis

We all know that what we do is connected in some way to what we believe. As Harrison points out the dominant Western idealist version of this connection is to see a division between thought and action with action proceeding from thought.² Harrison challenges the concept of objective thought which undergirds this view. She says that we can assume that everyone has an interest in whatever is taking place. This interest is evidenced by the way they operate in the world.³ People cannot separate their ideas about what "is" in the world and what "ought" to be, so disinterestedness is not possible. This latter point means that those who offer thoughts and theories are fully accountable for whom they affect. As she points out this is not held to be true in patriarchal theologies which are perceived as presenting the truth about God unaffected by the presenter of that "truth."⁴ In these patriarchal theologies, the human beings escape responsibility through their claim that they are only representing God's word, not their interpretation of same.

²Beverly Harrison, Our Right to Choose, Toward a New Ethic of Abortion (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983) 94.

³Ibid., 95.

⁴Ibid., 93.

Harrison's "theological hermeneutic of liberation" denies this lack of responsibility and says that it is our moral choices in the world which ground our theology.⁵ She is not interested in condemning white males, but rather desires to call "all to moral accountability for the state of the world".⁶ She believes that "out of a moral struggle to embody deeper patterns of human community, freshly empowering visions of God are born."⁷

Heyward's concepts are complimentary to this. For her "love is justice" not an oversentimentalized feeling. The connection between action and feeling is that we act our way into feeling.⁸ Once again here is the contradiction of the dominant western ideal that thought precedes action. "Love is not a feeling that precedes right-relation,"⁹ but rather it is the living out of right relation.¹⁰ In Heyward's as in Harrison's thought accountability is emphasized. We know what good and evil are and have the power to do both. In our effort to escape accountability,

⁵Ibid., 91.

⁶Ibid., 94.

⁷Ibid., 91.

⁸Carter Heyward, Our Passion for Justice, Images of Power, Sexuality, and Liberation (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1984) 86.

⁹Ibid., 85.

¹⁰Ibid., 86.

we created the God of Genesis whose image supports human belief that it is easier to be ignorant and irresponsible than it is to carry the burden of knowledge and thus be responsible. But her point is that we do know and we are responsible. What we can do with that knowledge is to begin where we are.¹¹

Rather than resourcing anything specific in the work of women in the ministry, these assertions by Harrison and Heyward give us a way to understand the process of writing a theology that begins with what someone or a group of people are doing. Not only does this offer the possibility of writing a feminist theology of pastoral care from the work of women ministers as presented in the interviews and the literature, but it also offers a theology that is grounded in moral action--in what the church does and not just in what it says it does. Several of the ministers interviewed mentioned that they were living statements to a different belief system. As Vivian put it, "The Body of Christ is seen as inclusive" when she is in the pulpit.

¹¹Carter Heyward, The Redemption of God, A Theology of Mutual Relation (Lanham: University Press of America, 1982) 151-152.

Bodyselves and Sexuality

Vivian's statement is an example of the "bodily witness" mentioned in Chapter 2. This concept is central to both of the theologies under discussion here. When the ministers were males only, there was no challenge to the image of God as male. Although we are not free from this type of thinking, its impact has lessened somewhat due to the influence of feminist theology and the impact of women in the ministry. Harrison points out that the women's movement, especially the attention addressed to health issues, has helped women value their bodies and to see ourselves as an "embodied psychosexual, spiritual unity."¹² While women, especially, have been made to feel guilty about our bodies and our sexuality, our sensuality is central to our lives. Harrison points out that our relations to others and to the cosmos are "mediated" through our bodies.¹³ The estrangement from our bodies which has been forced by dominant thought has helped to support the false notion that we are really independent and not connected to the rest of creation.¹⁴ This perception has led us to an individualism that threatens the fabric of our interdependent global

¹²Harrison, "Human Sexuality...", 151.

¹³Ibid., 154.

¹⁴Ibid., 152.

society and has resulted in a domination of the natural world that will eventually destroy all life. To carry Harrison's thinking a step further, the bodily witness of women ministers can help all people begin to accept their own bodies and their own sexuality and sensuality. This, in turn, may do much to healing the ills of the world

Heyward also places great importance on the centrality of the body and says that God cannot be contrasted with the mortal body whether it is an individual body or the body of humanity. Our bodies are God's body acting in the world. "...God is here to be fed , healed, encouraged, given shelter, befriended, accepted in the person of the neighbor or not at all."¹⁵ Like Harrison she does not limit sexuality or sensuality to sexual relations, but sees it as "our desire to participate in making love, making justice, in the world; our drive toward one another; ...our expression of our sense of being bonded in life and death."¹⁶ She goes on to point out that without love and justice sexuality is perverted into violence and violation.¹⁷

¹⁵Heyward, Our Passion, 140.

¹⁶Ibid., 86.

¹⁷Ibid.

Relation and Community

Being-in-relation holds a central place in the theology of Beverly Harrison. "God," she says, is the one who binds us and bids us to deep relationality."¹⁸ For her community is more basic than individualism and she rejects the liberal political argument that states that it is the other way around.¹⁹ She is critical of "the dominant theology of transcendence as unrelatedness (which) has given way to a humanism that sees us free to enter relationships if we so choose."²⁰ Relationship is a basic state for Harrison. Women are more likely to be aware of this than are men. Because of their dependence on others while they are bearing and rearing children, women are aware that humanity is connected and that this is a need for our very biological survival. Even women who have not had children have this awareness because of their socialization.

It is in community that our individual powers are enhanced and nourished. This happens through the mutual regard we show one another and by the co-creative way we act with each other.²¹ Freedom is not that which manifests

¹⁸Harrison, Our Right, 99.

¹⁹Ibid., 55.

²⁰Ibid., 51.

²¹Ibid., 99.

itself in invulnerability to others, but is the power of creativity--a power that enables us to "imaginatively interact" with each other.²² In Harrison's theology "the moral and religious vision underlying a feminist commitment places deep and realistic concern for basic community at the center."²³

For Heyward mutual relation is central. The subtitle of her first book is *A Theology of Mutual Relation*. Our relation to others is not over them, but in a mutual encounter.²⁴ She believes that the ultimate encounter is in reaching to touch others because it is in this encounter we can understand the "divinity of being human."²⁵

Anger and Justice

Anger is important in both Heyward and Harrison's thought. Harrison considers it to be "a vivid form of caring and a mode of connectedness to others. She says that it is "not the opposite of love, but a signal that all is not right."²⁶ She argues for the re-valuing of anger

²²Ibid., 100.

²³Ibid., 55.

²⁴Heyward, Our Passion, 143.

²⁵Ibid., 144.

²⁶Beverly Harrison, "The Power of Anger in the Work of
(Footnote Continued)

because "all serious human moral activity, especially action for social change, takes its bearings from the rising power of human anger."²⁷

Heyward talks about the appropriateness of rage "to our experience of lovelessness in our own lives and those of others."²⁸ Compassion is connected to this and is with rage one aspect of our honesty.²⁹ Compassion is our acknowledgement and confession that we are complicit in the injustices of the world.³⁰

It is in the struggle for justice that Harrison says, "we gain a living vision of God."³¹ When we truly do justice, it is out of our own understanding and knowledge, not out of conformity to an outside rule. Justice is the struggle to make right our disordered relations or at the very least to end the injustice.³² The relationship between love and justice for Harrison is that Justice is

(Footnote Continued)

Love: Christian Ethics for Women and Other Strangers," Union Seminary Quarterly Review 36:Suppl. Issue (1981) 49.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Heyward, Our Passion, 87.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid., 88.

³¹Harrison, "Human Sexuality," 159.

³²Harrison, Our Right, 115 and 159.

foundational to love--love cannot maintain where there is injustice.³³

Heyward says, "Justice is a forensic metaphor for the ethical establishment of love in human life."³⁴ Justice can be established without the feelings of love as happened in desegregation cases. She says that where there is no justice or moral act of love, that there is evil. Evil is not the absence of good, but the act of unlove or injustice. This means that the relational bond has been broken in such a way that the affected parties are disempowered to grow, to love and/or to live.³⁵

For Harrison power is found in our power of agency and is not separate from that of God. God's power is not objectified, but is power-of-relation. Our power comes through acting toward each other in search of right relationship.³⁶ Women, she says, have the power for better or worse not only to create personal bonds between people, but to build up and deepen personhood itself. The lives of women have been shaped by the power to bear human life and to nurture life which is a social and cultural power.

³³Ibid., 115.

³⁴Heyward, Redemption, 17.

³⁵Ibid., 18.

³⁶Harrison, "Human Sexuality," 159.

Genuine nurturance is a formidable power and when it has occurred, it has largely been through human action."³⁷

Power, in Harrison's theology has to do with God. God is power in relation to ourselves, to each other, to humanity in general, and to creation itself. God is the creative power which effects justice, or right relation, in the world. God is also our "re-source of power." To draw power actively is to realize who we are in relation.³⁸

The Commonwealth of God

There is no "Kingdom" in Harrison's theology, but there is a commonwealth. To her, "feminist moral theology" is utopic and realistic. It is utopic because it envisions a society where there are no excluded ones. It is realistic because it takes completely seriously the freedom we have for doing good and evil. In this regard, we have both the power to "person-each-other into love" (relationship) and the "power to obliterate dignity, respect, care and concern for humanity from our world."³⁹ The power of love is to keep us in the knowledge that we were not born to die, but

³⁷Harrison, "Anger," 47.

³⁸Harrison, Our Right, 6.

³⁹Harrison, "Anger," 53.

to have the gift of life and to know the power of relation and to pass this power on.⁴⁰

Heyward sees a voluntary cooperation of the human with the divine. This cooperation must be taken seriously because it has the power "to effect what is right and good in the world."⁴¹ To ignore this element of voluntary cooperation and human responsibility for same relieves us from any serious role in redemption. To recognize it means to take seriously that Jesus was responsible for his action in relation to God and so should we be serious in our relation to God. Redemption is the liberation of human beings from unjust relations in the present world and it is immediate. It happens here on earth in our own time.⁴²

God, Jesus, and the Trinity

Harrison says that we encounter God through relation with all that nurtures and sustains life. God is the preceding one; a "representing power present to us as companion, supporter, one who encourages, and lures into activity-in-relation."⁴³ Divine and human action coinhere

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Heyward, Redemption, 39.

⁴²Ibid., 39 and 132.

⁴³Harrison, Our Right, 108.

and cocreate the world.⁴⁴ This we know, but what we cannot know is who God is or what God was doing before we were created. Questions relating to what we cannot know are not important because they distance us from the here and now. These questions, which are typically addressed by many theologians, see God as wholly other and unaffected by us. In addition the answers to these abstract questions may serve to take us away from our finitude because to know who God is and what God does we have to be as God. Our relation to God is a celebration—a spontaneous act of gratitude, an ecstatic acknowledgement of the depth and inclusiveness of our being in relation. We don't reverence God because God is good and we are evil, but because we cocreate the good with God. We praise God because God is a part of all, not because God is separate.⁴⁵

Talk about the separateness of God has no place in Harrison's feminist relational theology. Thinking that images God as other reinforces the subject/object split which is characteristic of the positivistic notions that govern political idealism.⁴⁶ The aim of theology in a feminist liberational understanding is "to make the world luminous" which then "enables us to apprehend the power of

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid., 109.

⁴⁶Ibid.,.

creation that enfolds and sustains us and to responsibly shape that creation through our agency."⁴⁷

Heyward believes that because our understanding is born out of our existence, we know God only inasmuch as we know ourselves and our humanity.⁴⁸

"God does not stand alone beyond relation," but "comes to life in an act of reaching, touching, or bridging. This act is love. God is love and God is justice. God is also a verb. When we love we god. If we are fully human as we can be, as Jesus showed us we can be, then we are godders. The people of God bring God to life on this earth."⁴⁹

The Trinity for Heyward is another manifestation of the centrality of relationships and as such is "an intuition of ultimacy in relation."⁵⁰ Behind this doctrine which, she says, is "overworked and underthought and is often glib and sexist" is the intuition that nothing can be or ever was that is or was unrelated.⁵¹ In the image of the Trinity that which is most valuable is the love relation, the intimate friendship. In the image of God humanity and creation are in relation and none can live responsibly apart from the rest of the human body. Each body is valuable to

⁴⁷Ibid., 98.

⁴⁸Heyward, Redemption, 6.

⁴⁹Heyward, Our Passion, 140-141.

⁵⁰Ibid., 141.

⁵¹Ibid., 141-142.

the creation and creator as any body has ever been. At the same time we are not important in and of ourselves.⁵²

Harrison talks more about God and less about Jesus than does Heyward. To Harrison we have misunderstood Jesus' life as a willingness to sacrifice himself rather than as a refusal to desist from radical love. The praxis of Jesus for the paradigm of our salvation is in his passionate love of right relations and his refusal to cease to embody the power of relation. As with Jesus those who are willing to pay the high costs of the struggle for justice and who have their passion lovingly shaped are moved by a love strong enough to sustain their action for right relation even unto death.⁵³

Heyward says that Jesus needs to be re-imaged, but not is his lordship which sets him apart from humanity. We need to understand that the image of Jesus is a tool to come to better understanding of who we are in relation to God and to each other. We have to begin with how we live in the world (here we are back at action where I began this chapter) and how he lived in the world. If we do not, then we end up in "abstractions, universals, and ontic absolutes which may or may not bear any relation to human life."⁵⁴(49)

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Harrison, "Human Sexuality," 160.

⁵⁴Heyward, Redemption, 34.

Jesus is God's child who grows in relation and becomes God's friend in a voluntary and mutual relationship.

She feels that it is equally appropriate to reverse the image and have God as Jesus' child whose growth is facilitated by Jesus. The relation was dependent on Jesus' ongoing commitment to love and co-operate with God. Heyward feels it important that we emphasize Jesus of Nazareth instead of Jesus the Christ. In Jesus we see a human-divine relationship that is "so intimate that one's knowledge of the other is assumed and so immediate that there is no need for mediation."

Implications for Pastoral Theology

A feminist pastoral ministry would place great emphasis on how we act in the world and would hold us responsible for our actions. We would talk about what we believe in the context of our actions--through reflection on our actions.

A feminist ministry that comes out of the work of Heyward and Harrison would encourage deeper patterns of relation to ourselves, to each other, to humanity in general, and to all creation. In short, it would encourage deep relation to all that nurtures and sustains us. This relation would begin with knowing ourselves fully as embodied spiritual beings. In fully comprehending our bodyselves we can then understand our connectedness and

interdependence on the rest of life. Women may understand this bodyself more fully because most women have been dependent on someone else for the support of our biological needs. For many women the only thing that stands between them and their children and poverty is a man's paycheck. Living with that vulnerability gives women a different understanding of our physical and emotional connectedness and dependencies.

A ministry of this kind would honor anger and recognize it as a signal that all is not right. Because women have been the victims of misdirected anger, attention would have to be paid to the way anger is expressed. This brings in the concept of relationality. God would be understood as that which bids us into relation with all that nurtures and sustains us. Evil is that which breaks this relationality or leaves people powerless. It would be in this context that anger would be understood.

The concept of power is an important one for ministry not just for the minister herself, but for the laity. Power comes from acting in right relation. A feminist ministry would be one in which this concept was consciously raised in all meetings. Women would need to evaluate how they are using their power and whether they are using it in a co-creative way. Worship would be a celebration of this co-creativity.

Chapter 5

TOWARD A FEMINIST THEOLOGY OF PASTORAL CARE

The important word in the title of this chapter is "toward". A feminist theology of pastoral will never be finished. By its very nature it is dynamic because it arises out of the experience of humans in relation to each other, to the rest of creation, and to God. Although it is dynamic and in that sense unfinished, it is possible to articulate some of its important characteristics.

Relationship is at its heart. This appeared frequently in the interviews and literature, and it was a primary theme of Heyward's and Harrison's theological reflection. This was expressed in the interviews and literature in the context of maintaining contact and quality relations with members of the congregation and with family. All the women interviewed brought up relationships in the context of their backgrounds and in the ways in which their experiences as women inform their ministries. Faith Conklin's article specifically addressed this point.

Both Harrison and Heyward point to our deep connectedness and interdependency. Each offers, in her own way, a vision of relatedness to all that nurtures and sustains us. This vision begins with the knowledge of ourselves as bodyselves--people who experience not just with our minds, but also with our bodies. In both theologies

there is a concern for justice in relationships. This is what saves a theology of relation from being sentimentalized. It is not that all relationships are in and of themselves justified, but only when there is movement toward mutuality and away from subordination and dominance.

The issue of bodyselves came up in a slightly different way in the interviews and in the literature. The idea of women ministers being live visual aids for their congregations. There is a bodily witness not just to the inclusiveness of the church, but also a reimagining of God that is also inclusive. The impact of this may not be felt fully for years. We can only speculate on the changes in valuing of personal self-worth that is happening for women, long active in the church, who see their activity affirmed in the work of women ministers. Finally, there are women leading the congregation. Expected, too, is a profound change in the way ministry is thought of by children who may only know a woman in the pulpit or, at least, whose first experience is with a woman in the pulpit.

Images of God and Jesus expressed by the women ministers and certainly in Harrison's and Heyward's theology are more inclusive than those usually offered in churches who adhere to the dominant theologies. It is clear that the women who offered these images find them empowering and enabling. The expectation is that they will be found so by the people who hear them and especially by the women who do.

Challenges Facing Women in the Ministry

In one sense it is very difficult to separate out what women do in the ministry from that which men do. Maxine Walaskay in her article "The Invisible Woman," discusses this problem of treading in a male world and likens it to the world which Eve entered.¹ The challenge is to give visibility to women's ministries. Because the arts of ministry have been learned from men who have been in the parish it may be very difficult for women to define how they do ministry. Crossan's image of people who are wearing red-tinted contact lenses is appropriate. These folk never stop to ask whether they are wearing red-tinted lenses, but instead think that the color of the world is red. In the same way we may have trouble seeing what anything other than a male-defined ministry is like. Women ministers are attempting to establish a feminist ministry within such a context.

To define a feminist theology of pastoral care women in the ministry will have to share their stories. Reflection on their stories will be necessary. Several of the women interviewed commented that it was helpful to think about what it is they do in this reflective way. This is a special challenge for women, not because they lack the

¹Maxine Walaskay, "The Invisible Woman," Journal of Pastoral Care 27:3 (September 1973) 155.

mental capabilities, but because they lack the time. As women have joined the work force in greater numbers, it has become clear that they are still responsible for most of the work of the house and for the caring for children. This is especially true for women who put a high priority on relationships. The challenge will be how to fit one more task, albeit an important one, into an already too-full schedule.

Another important challenge will be to avoid the temptation of declaring certain types of ministry feminist and others not so. It would set woman minister against woman minister and that in itself is not consistent with a feminist theology that places a premium on relationship and on justice. The women who were interviewed were all struggling with their feminism in the context of their churches which were not always open to a feminist-defined ministry. Their struggles may, in fact, be what a truly-feminist ministry is: engaged and relational, always moving toward justice. These women ministers though not free to express the breadth of their feminism may be ministering out of a true feminist theology of pastoral care more so than the woman who is unfettered.

Directions for Further Study

This research is intended only as a starting point for other research. Future study would require

comprehensive, empirical research with a control group. The control group could be composed of only men or it could have men and women who have been group on the basis of attitudes about feminism. Such control groups could make possible the study of a question which is still open: the relationship between the ministry of men and women. Are they complimentary or opposite? or do they have some other relation?

An area tht could also be explored would be theological beliefs. One could survey participants responses in different areas of theology, drawing particularly on the theological categories of Heyward and Harrison. Questions could be concentrated in the areas of relations, anger, or love.

Another approach that might be helpful as a next step would be to form a group of women in the ministry and have them discuss questions like the ones that were asked of the women who were interviewed. Out of such an interchange more could be learned than in the one-to-one interviews conducted as part of this project. It might be possible to have a control group of male ministers discussing the same questions. Even better than questions might be to give case studies and discuss the questions in relation to the cases.

Another approach that could elicit important information would be to ask questions about experiences, such as: "Recount an experience in which it mattered as much that you were a woman as that you were a minister or

priest." This would be a way of collecting stories which might be more helpful than questions about theory or abstract concepts.

Conclusion

The results of this project will have to be deemed inconclusive as to proof of the thesis that a feminist theology of pastoral care would be more adequate in meeting needs of women than the dominant theologies. However, there is hope in the words of women ministers and in the theologies of Carter Heyward and Beverly Harrison. This hope is in the belief that there should be no excluded ones. The energies of the women contacted in person or through the written word seem to be directed toward that goal.

A P P E N D I C E S

Appendix A

SUMMARY OF VERBATIM RESPONSES

1. Tell me about your background especially as it relates to work in the church and in the ministry.

Sybyl: Unitarian Universalist. Earned a Master of Divinity at Thomas Starr King School for Professional Religious Leadership. Seven years in the ministry: two with her husband as a Co-associate in a large church; one year out in a "ministry of waitressing;" and four-plus years in her present church of one hundred and fifty-plus members. She is forty-eight and was recently divorced from her second husband (the minister). She has two adult sons.

Adele: Disciple of Christ. Ordained in 1973, one year before she earned her Master of Divinity. Her career in ministry includes one year as an associate. One year in what she describes as a "co-ministry" with her senior pastor. After the senior pastor left, she served as interim senior minister for one year and then as co-minister for one year after a new senior pastor was called. At the time of the interview she was a regional minister for her district. She had held that position for seven years and her duties included program-planning for youth and adults, crisis

intervention, and placement. In her mid-thirties, she is married to a minister and they have no children.

Bess: United Methodist. Prior to entering seminary she had been on church staffs as a musician and choir director. She had also been president of the district womens organization. She had also been a trustee of the seminary from which she latter graduated. During seminary she was a part-time associate. Bess has been in her present settlement for two-and-one-half years. Her church has one hundred and ten members. She has been divorced once and is now married to another UMC minister. Her three children are adults and living on their own.

Katherine: United Church of Christ although she grew up as a Methodist and entered seminary as UMC. She was ordained a deacon by the UMC in 1975 at age forty. Because the Methodists "didn't know what to do with her" and because the UCC church in which she was working wanted to ordain her and call her as their Assciate Minister, she changed denominations. She was ordained there in 1978 and served in that capacity until January 1983 when she accepted the call to her present church. She is married with four children. Prior to entering seminary, she was involved in youth work and served on the local school board and ran a political campaign. As long as she can remember, she has wanted to go

to seminary and as an adult was always very involved in church in a lay capacity.

Minna: Presbyterian. Married to a retired teacher. In 1947 she graduated from Whitworth College with a degree in Christian Education. When her youngest child was eight, she went to work as a DCE and continued in that capacity for sixteen years. She completed a Masters degree from the Presbyterian seminary in Marin County and was required to take an additional five course for ordination which happened in 1977. She served as an assistant minister for three years and has been the sole pastor of her present congregation for four years. Her church has one hundred and ninety members. She has three adult children.

Vivian: United Methodist. Ordained a Deacon in 1973. Served as an associate for one year. Was sole pastor of a church in a desert community for four years while her husband served a neighboring church. She and her husband then shared responsibility for three churches. After their first child was born, their "priorities changed." They wanted more time for their family and so now share the ministry of a church forty miles from Los Angeles. The church has two hundred and fifty members. Their second child was born in summer of 1984. She is in her mid-thirties. For several years she has been a member of the Board of Ordained Ministry. Her congregation knows that

she is a feminist, but she can talk about "kids, recipes, and sewing."

Clio: Unitarian Universalist. After WWII she worked as church secretary in a large church, and was encouraged by the minister to go to theological school to study religious education. She wanted to study for a Bachelor of Divinity, but did not get any encouragement. In her second year, married a fellow student. Married for twelve years and had no children. After the divorce, she worked as a DRE before returning to theological school. Earned her B.D. in 1967 and served as an associate until 1969 when she came to her present church. Her church has 75 members.

2. How do you draw on your experience as a woman in your ministry?

Sybyl: Totally. Wifeing, mothering; reflected in what ministry is about; nothing is unfamiliar (to me). CPE is based on a male need (because they--men--don't have experience with that kind of thing). (In ministry) feminine activities are being manifested. Women are live visual aids. (When one is the sole minister) masculine and feminine have each to be acted out fully, (but this) is not androgyny. My activities and being are feminist (even

though I do) not talk it. I couldn't do ministry without the maturity the years have allowed. I am doing it later because I am a woman. Men and women share some experiences, but as we (women) experience with our body, the experiences changes. Sacraments are a reflection of body experiences or a duplication of them in group fashion. (It is) important for women to notice that we have experience in body and are now experiencing in church. For example, the waters of birth--re-baptism. This affirms women's experience; can't happen if men do it. Hard to imagine anyone (a minister) not being a wife and mother. (Being a mother has given her the ability to) focus intently and break and go back. Children teach us that.

Adele: I spend time credentialing myself. More recently, this hasn't been as much of an issue, but may be one in the future. Being a woman is an advantage because there are not many role expectations and so we can creat our own. (People) don't know what we're supposed to do. Relation with parishioners and lifestyle issues are more open. Mine is not exclusively a women's model. It is a co-creative process (in which) the congregation is partner. (This is) making the client part of the healing process. I give them work and expect them to work hard so they will get out of their feeling of helplessness. (She has) a sensitivity as a woman. (She) doesn't need to be the big cheese although (she is) directive. I give

credit -- sometimes more than is deserved. I spend a lot of energy not being a daughter and establishing myself as an individual. (This is because her father is well-known in the denomination. I am cautious because the congregations with whom I work have male ministers and so I operate within their language sphere because my interest is in helping the congregation be healthier. Being with a congregation as a woman has enough power. Being tall helps, too.

Bess. Hard to say, but every so often I have an "ah-ha!" experience. Mine is a relational, not a machine model. Women are better at drawing out gifts and skills than in being an only authority. This inspires loyalty in the people who work with you. Because of the way we had to fit into families, women are relational over hierarchical. Mothers get used to pulling things together. It is our second nature to keep things balanced and plan in our heads. I take everything personally including my husband's problems which has caused a lot of stress. I grieve and take so much of people's grief. It is in the character of a woman to be a mother 24 hours a day. I always have a sense of the congregation and know when something is wrong. It is an intuitive knowing before objective knowledge. Women tend to be extra-sensitive. I am a resource person because I'm used to resourcing family and assessing needs.

Katherine. Don't think about it self-consciously, but I'm really present with people. My whole self is there. I can't separate out who I am as an individual from who I am as a woman. I have a tenderness about me and I'm not afraid to cry. My church seems as though it is a battered child and I have gathered it up and nurtured it. I'm interested in building individual and collective self-esteem. I can baptize a baby like nobody else can. I use a lot of feminist language and my congregation kids me. I leave the old stuff alone, but uses new, inclusive stuff. I know that it does make a difference to have a woman (as minister), but I have never gotten the impression that any men have left because of me. The image of Lazarus being unwrapped is how I came to feminism. I have a hard time distancing myself--womanthing. Good to live away from the church. I am not used to insisting on my own space. I am always mothering. (If there is a) tradeoff (it is that) women are on the side of warmth and nurturing. With kids you listen and want to fix things.

Minna. I'm a reconciler--sensitive when people are hurting and I want to make things better. I identify with people who feel trapped, overcome, put down. I had only one bad year in the ministry and that was when I couldn't find a church, but I was able to turn things around. As a woman I may see ways of bringing new life as I did in (the previous church) which was a temporary settlement, but I put a lot

of time in. Because I am 58 years old, I have lived long enough to see trends (so) I can integrate and look at the whole. Women in my church don't prepare meals for congregational events. All are potluck except the Annual Meeting which is prepared by the outgoing elders. No one woman is responsible; all help.

Vivian: My being a woman has really made a difference in two areas: (dealing with) reproductive issues and marital problems. Women seem to feel more free in coming to me even when my husband and I have a different, non-traditional marriage and even when people in the church have very traditional marriages. I am personally a perfectionist and a detail person which is probably partly because I am a woman.

Clia: Everything I do. All of it comes from my experience as a woman. I am woman-identified. It's taken me a long time to find out there's another way of being in the world. Men are different. I can't associate myself with a male world.

3-A. How do you draw on your experience as a woman in the area of church administration and leadership?

Sybyl: I consider myself a leader. My watchwords are patience and faith. Ministers are good in

administration and waiting. I use process authoritarian mode and have been called the "steel butterfly." I have softness with toughness. Softness is easier and toughness has to be developed. With men softness has to be allowed. I had a fear that I would fulfill the negative expectation that a female minister would crumble. Now I can cry and did so at a board meeting after the death of my father-in-law. (She can do this) because I have built up toughness. Earlier, (crying) would have been a question of stability. I tend to be authoritarian because the minister has total responsibility to make judgments, recommendations and suggestions and has to live with the results of poorly-made decisions. I am a good, firm administrator.

Adele: I tend to be more directive than enabling. I see myself as a visionary, a navigator. My primary job is to think, plan, dream, and strategize, and to take care of the congregation. I try to ensure that the rewards will be worth it (the work). Feedback is that I assume mythic proportions for the congregation--a mythic leader. My leadership is best with women because I understand the style. Women in religious life need models. Mine (style) is structured, not enabling especially when working with kids. I am conscious of hierarchy in religion. (In regard to) myself, I am only aware of it when people react to me (because of her position). I am not conscious of my status,

but am working in a particular place because that works best.

Bess: (My model) is out of biblical model of Jesus: relational, empowering, calling together. I work hard with the laity and help them find that role which frees them to be "leaven in the bread." I am no less an authority, only more vulnerable because I don't have secrets--no mysterious power. We have to work together. Mine is a vulnerable kind of power.

Katherine: My family has been democratic. (For that reason I could) never have an authoritarian ministry. (Her model) is working with, although I will say something if I have strong feelings. I am not confrontive, maybe not enough. Although I learned from my time on the school board that I had to do what was right. I have had a hard time distancing myself (which is) a womanthing. (Our denominational) polity is really congregational--plain old individual style of leadership. If a community decides to go with it, it comes out a mutuality. We do what needs to be done and what we can do. I am enthusiastic. I don't need to do it all, but am with the congregation emotionally. A lot of my ideas (about leadership) came out of youthwork where you give them an idea which they think is dumb, but later it's their idea and they think it's good. I don't have strong feelings about most things and am flexible.

Minna: My style is not distinctively woman as against man. I don't believe in hierarchichal, but practice (instead) collegiality. Once in a while I will use my authority. However, I usually won't make a decision, but will share the process.

Vivian: I am more process-oriented than authoritarian, but I think it has less to do with sex than with age. I notice men in the conference who are under 40 seem to be more collegial. My husband and I definitely are. I think that administration is probably the hardest area to see the distinction (between feminine and masculine).

Clio: My whole idea of enabling comes from Religious Education and (working in) a nursery school. I am trying to have a good nursery school and help people grow up. I am always encouraging people, helping them to see the possibilities, letting them do it although I don't let everyone do everything. But I stay out of it, make a lot of suggestions, and keep on. Another part comes from psychotherapy which helped solidify my identity as a woman. (I had to deal with the question) "Who am I?" (I am always dealing with the issues of) responsibility and dependency. For my first five years here, I had to do everything including running the board meetings. In the nursery school, if there was a discipline problem, (we had to restore) order because nothing could happen.

3-B. How do you draw on your experience as a woman in the area of preaching?

Sybil: (I am aware of the) okayness of using "I" in a sermon. (For women there are) no role models, no voice models, no dress models, no women to look at. I still carry a burden in ceremonial occasions--an extra burden because I represent all women. During worship I make certain that I am seen fully. (Being seen) whole body as a way to move from unconsciousness to consciousness (of the congregation) that I am a woman. When I was president of the district ministers association, I made certain that I was seen fully and did not hide behind a podium. I always prepare sermons with a nine-year-old boy and girl in mind and never say anything that would harm a child growing up and I want neither (of the children) excluded. I am always prepared ahead. I gave a sermon on language recently, the first time I have talked about what I am doing. I am an authoritarian on the issue of language--there are not two sides to this.

Adele: I don't preach salvific sermons--not my job, the the local pastors'.

Bess: I affirm where they are. The beginning of understanding the world's problems is understanding that we have power and a commission (to do something about them). I try to personalize things. I try to help people see that

they are not alone. I am not pietistic, but relational. In worship I have people look around (to see the others). I am careful that the liturgy is inclusive except for the hymns. I am careful not to use masculine language for God. This is important for me personally, but I don't force it on people. Because this is an elderly congregation (and there are not very many men) women are in leadership positions. (In choosing people to be) lay liturgists, I am sensitive because there are so many women (in leadership) to use men. (When I am away from the pulpit) I almost always bring in a man for preaching. In these ways she is more sensitive than the men who have served the church before.

Katherine: My sermons have solid, tough scholarship, not flowery and in this sense is not unlike men's. I have very strong feelings about language being inclusive because it is very important to power determination and self-fulfillment.

Minna: I use experience from my life experience when appropriate. I have preached on Luke 15, the "lost parables," which depict God as a woman and have done a dialogue sermon on Mary and Martha.

Vivian: A woman in the pulpit presents a different type of image--(one that is) more inclusive. In my experience usually there are more women in church than men

and usually a man is up front taking credit. My preaching style is not different than a man's, but my language is inclusive. I draw on my experience which is different than that of men's. I use images of children and of sewing and needlework (which I do when I have the time). I have strong feelings about inclusive language, but I have had to moderate this with the congregation or else I might as well not say anything. I sometimes use "Lord," although this is not a word I feel comfortable with. I remove male image of God, but I haven't done anything with hymns because that is too threatening. I have lectured on the Inclusive Lectionary.

Clio: I am reticent about preaching. I would be uncomfortable being dramatic, flamboyant, and showing off. I am more interested in content than delivery, although this is not necessarily because I am a woman. I am very conscious of being a woman when I preach and try to cool it; have to try not to be the stereotype of a woman with too many gestures. I don't want to be too feminine, but I don't want not to be. I have doubts about myself as a speaker because women are not encouraged to give speeches. I don't want to be timid like a woman or aggressive like a man. When I put a sermon together there is no beginning, no middle, and no end. My sermons are circular: they start with me, go out and come back and on...Heidegger talks about this. (Asked about examples) I am a prime example. I am not

conscious of picking feminine examples. I won't use an example unless it sets right with me. The writing process is unconscious--I don't have any idea where I am coming out. (Writing a sermon) is another exercise in (finding out) who I am and what I think. I am grateful to the congregation because they let me stay and do wild sermons.

3-C. How do you draw on your experience as a woman in the area of counseling?

Sybyl: I Feel like my experience gives a capacity for understanding. I have worked hard on my own things in life. To make certain that my ministry is balanced I think that it is important to keep tabs on how many men and women come for counseling. Right now it is equal.

Adele: Not asked.

Bess: People appreciate my interest in all areas of their lives and come to me with problems. By being relational and without judging, I am committed to working through to the best solutions and giving people a place to stand which gives them the feeling that they are forgiven. My whole concept of pastor is relational and vulnerable. I share my troubles and my need for their ministry.

Katherine: Counseling is not one of my fortes. It has been so easy for me. My husband has been great and so have the kids although they are not perfect. I don't draw on problems and so I can't understand how it can be so hard. I am impatient with women who are chronic complainers, whiners. I am no expert, but I do a real gut counseling. I don't emphasize counseling. I am good with people, but I haven't honed my (counseling) skills. I am trying to be more of a listener. If it's really genuine, I cry with them.

Minna: Women have told me things that they wouldn't tell a man. Because I am a wife and mother, (people feel more comfortable sharing).

Vivian: I do as more pastoral care in a meeting than in a counseling setting. I talk to people anywhere. There are some women in the church who ask me to go out to lunch and that's a signal that there is something wrong. I do kitchen table counseling. I find it easier to sit down with a woman (and talk because there is) more instant acceptability.

Clio: My decision to do long-term counseling was situational; it was a response. Most of the time I don't think about counseling. It's intuitive—I know what people are feeling. If I had a system it wouldn't work. I don't

know of anyone to whom I could refer people. I am more comfortable, I think, counseling women because I understand more and women can benefit more. Men can, but may not benefit as much. Their problems are greater--they are more alienated.

3-D. How do you draw on your experience as a woman in Religious Education?

Sybil: I am not involed with ongoing R.E. It is not a high priority. I do make home visits with families in the R.E. prgram especially so that the children can get an experience of the ministry. I do consult with the committee and the Director of Religious Education.

Adele: Not asked.

Bess: I have a hands on involvement. I do the youth group which meets irregularly, but I am always available to them.

Katherine: This is the hardest and most important area. I have had student help (from seminary students). I am teaching the youth. It's hard to do it all. I have been there almost two years and have finally gotten the Sunday School at the same time as the worship service.

Minna: I have moments with the children as part of the worship service. I really talk with the kids. I am real comfortable and more skilled (because of her experience as a Director of Christian Education). When they're not responsive, they leave for Sunday School. (She said this in the context of not forcing them to talk.) I sit down with them.

Vivian: It's really exciting that kids are growing up who think in terms of the male and ~~female~~ images represented by me and my husband. I am not sure what difference being a woman has made except that it may be that I am there with the teachers supportive and interested. At first, I had problems because (R.E.) is a traditional woman's area, but I have found that I like it. I do have more familiarity with curriculum and more experience with child development process than my husband.

Clia: Children are important. They are included in worship. I am concerned about women because I am concerned about children. Child-raising is the most important thing anyone can do. I want to change child-rearing practices; this is the most important part of the ministry for me.

3-E. How do you draw on your experience as a women in the area of social justice?

Sybyl: I have a more diffuse awareness of peace. Her children have just passed draft age so I have a mother's experience of war. I have been called to the church by a vast spectrum and I have a conflict between the prophetic and the pastoral. I am a new being in the political arena.

Adele: I see in the local church a real lack of understanding of the world today. Changes in America are seen as things to be cured. These are not moral issues, but if things were as they were then we (the church) could minister.

Bess: I give the congregation courage. I try to do this for all.

Katherine: I am not a prophet, but a clown. I work at social justice issues because I believe in them, but my inclination is to be nurturing, supportive, a mother hen. I do all the issues (in sermons) that are suggested by the denomination. I don't want to be confrontive, but want to fulfill Christian responsibility. Most of us are Pharisees. If the congregation loves you they will listen, but not if they are being beat over the head. Nothing is sacred--every issue is to be dealt with. In one of my sermons I took on the Pope and the Bishops who wanted to censor Geraldine Ferraro.

Minna: I don't cram opinions down peoples throats, but I do raise questions. I was cautious when I first came to this church, but people will trust. I tend to be cautious and not abrasive. Because I am a woman I go cautiously. I want to raise issues so people can hear and not condemn.

Vivian: This is my husband's area of responsibility. I have preached on controversial issues and the church has worked on women's issues. One area in which I have a strong commitment because as a woman, I know what it is to be excluded is on the issue of homosexuality.

Clio: I can't separate what a church is from what social justice is. Men are more inclined to think about bandaids. As a radical feminist I am out to change the system. Consequently, I am not too interested in specific issues. My motto is "Feminism is not an issue it's the whole thing." I don't work in the peace movement or others (on specific issues) because I am interested in something beyond that.

4. What images of the divine, of God, and of Jesus do you bring to your ministry? How are they communicated? What difference do they make?

Sybyl: I am a little left of Mary Daly. God/Divine is not anthropomorphic. I use Process Philosophy without being Christian. I use the word "God" carefully. I like to use theological words and redefine and explain them. In the role of priest I communicate as a woman out in front of the pulpit. My image makes it impossible for God's image to be totally male.

Adele: God is overwhelmingly Creator and nurturer--parent; sometimes healer and/or empowerer. Christ is a visionary, a revolutionary, turning everything inside out--parabolic. My images of God are mothering images. Images of Jesus Christ as brother or partner rather than as inaccessible.

Bess: God is a very responsive, caring, loving God--being open to where we are--not manipulative, but responding; not punishing, but weeping with us and over us. All of us carry God and we can all make a difference. God works in partnership with us. Jesus was a servant, but not meek and mild. Lived as human a life...We can use that as a model pulling us together.

Katherine: I use image of God as tender mother--strong and tender with children at her breast. I never use "father" because it is so common and others use it so much. I won't correct those who use it, but I do want to balance...I do not use "almighty" or "omnipotent" because I

prefer Process imagery. Worship has both feminine and masculine images. God is in the world. God is calling us. I tend to shy away from Jesus, but I do talk about the "spirit of the Cosmic Christ" and Christ being creative transformation. I see Christ as neighbor and in the world.

Minna: I am careful of the overly-masculine, but I do use the masculine. I think of God in feminine images, but I do not address God as "mother" in public. Instead, I use "Gracious God" or "Loving God". I am aware of the feminine imagery in the Bible. Jesus is a liberator especially for women. He brings something radically new: supportive, encouraging, and breaking out. I do not eliminate "Father" totally because I am aware of Jesus calling "Abba" and because I had a good relation with my own father. God is beyond gender. Jesus and all of us have feminine aspects--gentle, but not mild.

Vivian: What I believe personally and what I speak about are often different because the congregation is not ready. I have a mother-father image of God. I remove masculine imagery without adding female. There are only so many issues you can deal with. In small groups, like the Worship Committee, there are interesting discussions. Whenever the occasion arises, I talk about images. Now there is more creative thinking on the committee and this is making a difference.

Clid: Jesus was a feminist, a liberator. I think of God as a process. I have thought that God is nature from the beginning of my life and I am a part of it. My image is wholistic so I am not alienated or fragmented. I have a responsibility to talk about the process that is God, to explain it, to understand it and to get plugged into it. I do this partly because of responsibility and partly because of suffering humanity.

5. Do you perceive yourself as offering a different type of ministry than the male ministers you know? Explain.

Sybyl: When I was in co-ministry with my husband, I was freed to focus on feminism knowing that the balance came from someplace else. When I took this church, I had to decide to balance. I couldn't be as loud and blatant. I am called by, and minister to, both men and women. We can't get out of masculine and feminine identities. We are socialized to think that one is good and one is bad. There are really two parts, both are needed in ministry. Women are bringing balance and conscious awareness of both things for all.

Adele: I work with congregations in severe decline because of their inability to adapt to changing circumstances. This is not a male or female issue.

Although the fear of change or fear of diversity could be sexist.

Bess: Women put more priority to those in need; working with people on relationships. Women help people see how to humanize a situation and to make it more loving and caring. I see a different kind of accountability. I don't believe that it is enough just to sit at my desk long enough or to attend meetings. Most women (in the ministry) are extroverts like me. A lot of male clergy are introverts.

Katherine: The differences are more individual than sex-based.

Minna: Aesthetics matter more to me. I create a whole room environment. This is based on my experience with Christian Education where the whole environment tells something.

Vivian: Age is more a factor than sex in administration and leadership.

Clio: Not asked.

6. What theologians have been important to you?

Sybil: Whitehead-lots. Feminists: Penelope Washbourn, "Process Papers," Reuther, Daly.

Adele: Schüssler-Fiorenza, Jean Baker Miller, Lyle Schaller, Sally McFague, Dominic Crossan.

Bess: John Cobb, Marjorie Suchocki, Tillich, the book, Feminism and Process Thought, Wesleyan theology.

Katherine: John Cobb, Reinhold Niebuhr, Sue Dunfee's work on the sin of hiding, Mollenkott, Daly.

Minna: John Cobb, Buechner, Hans Dieter Betz, Robert McAfee Brown, Bonhoeffer, Wangerin, and Schweizer.

Vivian: Tillich, Letty Russell, Rosemary Reuther, Nelle Morton, Ann Wilson Schaef, Gutierrez and Friere.

Clio: Heidegger, David Roberts, Henry Nelson Wieman, Daly and Reuther, and her former husband.

7. Do you feel you can express yourself fully as a woman in your ministry? What limits do you see for yourself?

Sybyl: I express myself well, but not fully. I have a fear of self-exposure and of being hurtful or offensive. As a woman I have a problem with time and an on-going struggle with the congregation. My time is seen as interruptable and my private time is not valuable (even to me). I am learning to make my own space. I am still struggling with being consumed by a profession and asking what that means for a relationship. When I was still married and looking for a church, I had to decide where to live. I was not programmed for it (that kind of decision).

Adele: The only limits are my own. Stamina is a problem especially with geography and diversity I serve, but this is not a male or female issue. Women can't move into large churches. Most are in small churches.

Bess: I get discouraged because the system is still very male. It's easier to be a district superintendent than to be in a high-steeple church. Within my own congregation, I am tempered, but I can really be myself. I have a very open ministry and can do outside things.

Katherine: I don't feel limited. The limits may come in wanting to be a senior pastor in a large church. My commitment is to shove a break-through.

Minna: There are no real ones. I want to be conscious of men and women in church that they are, first, human beings with a lot to share. The congregation knows that I am not using the church as a stepping stone. Younger women have a harder time. I believe that I am more attractive because of my age and experience.

Vivian: Yes, on the whole, I feel received and accepted by the congregations I have served. I have certainly broken stereotypes, and generally, I feel fulfilled. No, I can't be fully open about faith and God. There is some compromise to stay in the institutional church, but in my ten years I can see a difference in the church. Although I am concerned that the conservative backlash may have an impact. I like my work most days, but sometimes I get tired of the administration and petty personal stuff. However, it is all worthwhile because it is a profound experience to work with people in celebration and crisis. The limits have been imposed by the choices (my husband) and I have made. Choosing to work half-time and spend time with my family has had an impact. I have had to make choices and have priorities and not have to be superwoman.

Clio: Yes. I couldn't ask for anything better than the opportunity I have in the ministry. The limit is time.

Appendix B

CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF JOURNAL ARTICLES

(An asterisk before the title denotes that this article was included in the sample in Chapter 3.)

Christian Ministry

- 6:3 (May 1975) * "Woman in Ministry" by Gail G. Buchwalter, United Presbyterian minister and co-pastor of the Community of Reconciliation in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, pp. 7-10
- "On Planting a Few Seeds" by Jean A. Eyrich, Chicago Theological Seminary student, pp. 15-18
- * "What Baptism Means to Women" by Elsie Gibson, United Church of Christ Minister, pp. 4-6.
- * "Welcome Sisters" by Sara A. Payne, pastor of Tabor Presbyterian Church, Crozet, Virginia, pp. 11-15.

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8:2 (Mar 1977) "Father God No More Reigns O'er Us" by Judy Thomas, member of the steering committee of the National United Methodist Women's Caucus and a former staff member of the Ecumenical Women's Centers, pp. 23-26

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33.

12:2 (Mar 1981) * "Daddy Works and Mommy Is a Minister"
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Hills United Methodist Church in
California, pp. 10-13.

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* "It Would Have Been a Put-on" by Margaret Monroe-Cassel, co-pastor of First Baptist Church in Bainbridge, New York, pp. 22-23.

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